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#70 SPRING 2001

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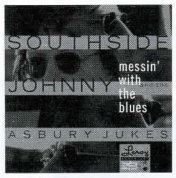

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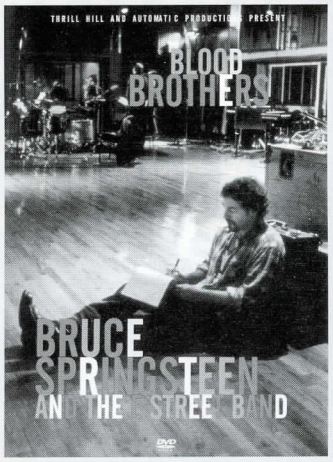

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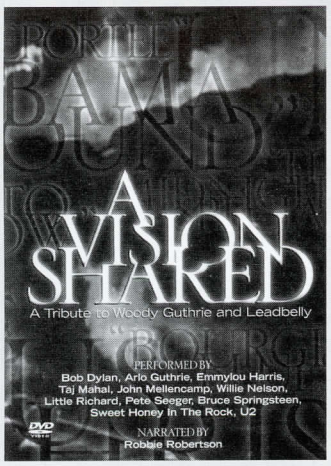

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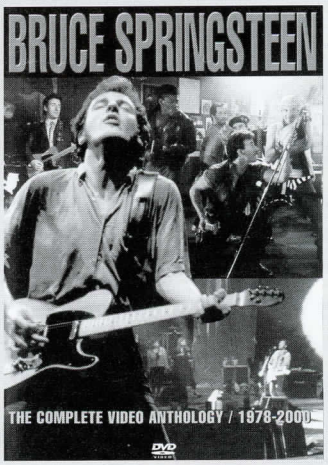

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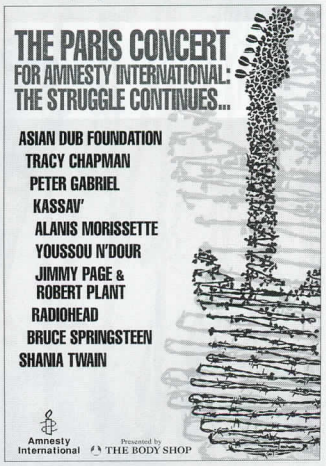

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KEN LESNIK PHOTO

Who's that comin' down the alley? Asbury Park, 12/18/00.

Backstreets

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12/17/00 Asbury Park, NJ
Mark R. Sullivan Photo

OFF THE WALL

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
2/8/01 Portland, OR
Jill Brady/*Portland Press Herald* Photo

LETTERS

HOLIDAYS ON ICE

Dear Editor:

A snowstorm in Minneapolis almost did me in, but I made it to Asbury Park for the Monday night show. The absolute highlight for me was the spontaneous three-song acoustic "set" during the soundcheck. No sooner than ten or 15 minutes after we walked into Convention Hall, Bruce sat down at the piano and started testing it out.... It was unbelievable to see Bruce in such a relaxed format.

The show itself was unlike any Springsteen show I have ever seen. The additional musicians really allowed Bruce to showcase the many facets of his music, from the straight-ahead rock 'n' roll we all love to the country influences ("Blue Christmas"—I wish he had done more of that style during the show); to jazz ("Kitty's Back," with some unbelievable soloing from almost everyone on stage, and the complete album version of "E Street Shuffle"); to the R&B that Southside and Little Steven pioneered in Asbury way back when; to the amazing new material ("My City of Ruins") that required both the subtle touch and great power of the E Street Band. And it was interesting to see various pieces of the bands he has used in his previous work—horns from the *Tunnel of Love* tour, the backup singers for *Lucky Town*—all melded into one. It allowed Bruce to go practically anywhere he wanted musically... and he did! We only needed a Monopoly game on stage, and it would have been Dr. Zoom and the Sonic Boom all over again.

Yoji Shimizu
Minneapolis, MN

Dear Editor:

It would be of great service to Asbury Park if Bruce released a CD single of "My City of Ruins" to benefit the restoration of the Palace and the Casino. Asbury Park is not just about Springsteen. For me, it holds wonderful summer memories of childhood. It is a disgrace that prime real estate has been allowed to decay, and how the paradise of my youth—and so many others, including Bruce—lies as desolate as an Old West ghost town.

Laura J. Simurda
via e-mail

Bruce and Patti save Asbury Park from a Blue Christmas, 12/17/00.

MARK R. SULLIVAN PHOTO

POLL POSITIONS

Dear Editor:

Well! Let's just go to a Da Vinci exhibit and skip over that silly Mona-whatever-her-name-is. Let's go to Niagara Falls, stay at the hotel and maybe ask if they have that thing with all the water on video. Let's conjure up the spirits of Amelia Earhart and Jimmy Hoffa or the guys who built the pyramids and say, "Hey, we just wanted to know if you knew any good jokes." Let's buy out Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream and get rid of all those hard-to-pronounce flavors—well, maybe not vanilla. Or: Let's ask Bruce Springsteen to retire Thunder Road!?!

I was skimming through "The Tour 1999-2000 Readers' Poll" [*Backstreets* #68/69] and read the responses to question four, "What song, if any, could be retired?" First, I blinked a few times. Then, I did that RCA dog thing with my head. Then, I reread the question and the corresponding voted answers to make sure I read correctly. By now, you can picture me there with the magazine in one hand and a pair of high voltage paddles against my chest with the other, yelling "Clear!" And if that wasn't enough to phone my local priest for an hour-and-a-half asking how he knows there's really a God, I flipped a few pages over to the editors' picks to see that "Thunder Road" was there as well. Wha-hut!?!?

Let's read *Playboy* for the articles! Let's go to the Super Bowl for the half-time show! Let's watch *Titanic* for the brilliant dialogue! I'm running away with myself here, but I think you get the picture.

Tom Sierchio
Toms River, New Jersey

Dear Editor:

The various statistical information is always fun and informative, and I really enjoyed the editors' and readers' polls as well. In keeping with the candid spirit of the poll I choose Albany, NY, as the "weakest" of the ten shows I was lucky enough to see. Ah, the power of one vote. Since I was quoted in the article, I would like to offer an addendum to my choice. I drove from my brother's house on Eastern Long Island to Albany (by myself), had a quick dinner, went to the show, and then drove back to Long Island that night. I got in around 3:30 a.m. (traffic was light on the Throgs Neck Bridge) and was up at 8:00 to drive back home to Boston with my wife and daughter. So the question is: Would I make this 400-mile roundtrip and "drive all night" alone again to see the exact same "ordinary" show? In a New York minute. Just book the hall and "throw my body in the back."

Larry Thompson
via e-mail

Dear Editor:

Hey, I was at the Albany show, and two things stood out: Bruce's constant air hankies, clearing out what was clearly a congested nose and chest, and the version of "Because the Night." Bruce wasn't feeling well, but what a pro! He stalked the stage with determination and gave 100 percent, even though the cold was taxing his energy. I was in the seventh row and duly impressed with his athletecism. And "Because the Night" tore the roof off the place—this was no weak show! September 3 in DC was much more staid, "special guests" or not. It's amazing how people have different impressions from the same gig, but Albany was all blue-collar muscle and heart—that's all Bruce had to give on this night, and he gave all.

Bill Kenney
via e-mail

LOOSE ENDS

Dear Editor:

I wanted to add a bit of info that I didn't recall reading in the tour wrap-up. During the 1999-2000 tour, Springsteen did not repeat the same setlist twice. I am not talking about just the order of the songs—he did not

even repeat the same full group songs, not even once. Just something amazing about the tour, and it makes you wonder if Bruce did that on purpose. It would just seem hard to play 134 shows and not, just once even by accident, play the same setlist as on another night. I am one of those people who took the time to rate each setlist, and I stumbled on this fact as I went through them.

Jim Beaver
via e-mail

Dear Editor:

In *Backstreets* #68/69, in the section titled "By the Numbers" you list songs given "partial credit." One song not on the list was "Dirty Water," which Bruce and Steve riffed for a few seconds during "Light of Day" on the first night in Boston, 8/21/99. Just thought I would pick a nit.

Michael Maloney
via e-mail

DAR SHE GOES

Dear Editor:

I anxiously awaited issue 68/69 in hopes that there would be a review of the *Nebraska* Tribute, *Badlands*, and there was ["Head-on Collisions"]. For years, I would not accept other artists "covering" any of Springsteen's songs. I guess I just felt any other artist would do a disservice to the Boss. Nevertheless, a few years back I gave the *One Step Up* album a shot, and I actually enjoyed it. When I heard of the *Badlands* release, I marked the date on my calendar and rushed out to get it, mostly out of curiosity. I had my opinions about the record but was really looking forward to what a "professional" would think.

Much to my surprise, Chris Nelson confirmed much of what I felt, particularly regarding Chrissie Hynde's rendition of "Nebraska." As I was reading it, I felt as if he put in to words exactly what I was feeling. However what prompted me to write this letter was Dar Williams' amazing rendition of "Highway Patrolman." I was so curious to hear what others had to say about it, and I was disappointed with the omission of any commentary regarding it. I think Chris dropped the ball here. In my opinion, that song is by far the highlight of *Badlands*, and I am truly moved each time I play it. Her interpretation of the song only reinforces what I've known for 20 years: Bruce can paint vivid pictures of the human spirit, good or bad, simply with his lyrics.

Gino Sangiuliano
Barrington, RI

I TURN ON THE VIDEO

Dear Editor:

Just a few thoughts on the DVDs released yesterday. I rushed out after work and picked them up, throwing in disc two of the *Anthology* when I got home. And, I gotta say, I was disapointed. I was really looking forward to the live "If I Should Fall Behind" but instead got what looks like a soundcheck version with the camera so tight it was almost uncomfortable to watch. That song was such a great moment at the shows I saw, one of the reasons being the fans' reactions as each member of the band took the mic. None of that comes through here—it's just a better song live. "Highway Patrolman" is a waste. Great song, but the video is just a long advertisement for *The Indian Runner*—how about the live version from 1984-'85, or even the *Tom Joad* tour? Is there a need for two "Ghost of Tom Joad"s, one right after another? It's also unfortunate that the live clips, save for "Murder Inc.," are with bands other than the E Streeters.

I don't know how other people feel about the sets; overall, as a huge Springsteen fan, I think they're great to have. I just find it frustrating because it seems like it could have been a lot better. Nothing yet, officially that is, has captured the true joy and power of Bruce and the E Street Band live.

Matthew G. Marois
via e-mail

SPIRIT FOUND

Dear Editor:

An article in *Backstreets* #68/69, "Searching for the Spirit" by Sean O'Toole, could not have been more off the mark if it had been written by someone who had never been to a Springsteen show. Mr. O'Toole's dissatisfaction with the tour seems to be

Continued page 38

THUNDER ROAD

The first Springsteen fanzine, *Thunder Road*, stopped publishing in the early '80s after only a handful of issues, but they were an inspiration to *Backstreets* and remain great collectibles and great reads, too. This double issue was the magazine's swan song and probably its best. *Thunder Road* #6/7 is a huge 64-page issue packed with solid writing and beautiful photos. We've scored the very last stack of these and can offer them at a lower price than we've seen before, but when they're gone, that's it. Especially at this price, it's a must have.

FINAL ISSUE OF THUNDER ROAD.....$10

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Bruce delivers

Springsteen Live... Right Now

By Christopher Phillips

People can always find something to complain about. Yeah, we're getting a live album, but it's not a full show. It's out of sequence. Why couldn't it have been a studio album? Or a show from 1978? The HBO "concert" special is really only half a concert. For more than a few Springsteen fans, judging by the letters *Backstreets* has received lately, every silver lining has a cloud.

That may be a real-world view—it's practically a Pavlovian response after the history of questionable choices regarding what material gets released and how. But it misses the bigger picture.

As of this writing, none of us have heard the album yet—promotional copies aren't even making the rounds. I'm as anxious as anyone to get my hands on it, but for now it actually feels like a luxury to be able to write about *Live in New York City* without hearing it, to view it simply as an idea rather than a product. And conceptually, out-of-sequence or not, the coming of the live album and concert film feels like faith rewarded.

Of course, the first blessing to count is that *Live in New York City* and *Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band* (the HBO special) are happening at all. Not long ago, live material like this would be just the kind of thing that got left in the dust when Springsteen peeled out to pursue his next project. Instead, these April windfalls are both a culmination and a continuation of a drastic shift marked by 1998's *Tracks*.

Springsteen spent the better part of that year reacquainting himself with his own unreleased material—songs that were casualties of his drive to move forward artistically, shelved when they didn't fit an album. At the time, it was hard to see past the four-disc bounty and think about what Springsteen's willingness to finally let go of all that material might suggest. Though *Tracks* comprised recordings dating back to the early '70s, the box was put forth very specifically as music *of the present moment*. As the television promo goes, "If you haven't seen it, it's new to you." Whether or not one buys that spin on the outtakes hardly matters. If Springsteen hadn't quite abandoned his dedication to the here-and-now, he had at least expanded his view of what could make it under that umbrella.

Since that fall of 1998, Springsteen has hardly paused for breath, actively welcoming the past and present together with open arms. He put out three additional "lost" songs on *18 Tracks*, including a new (here-and-now) recording of "The Promise." He reconvened the E Street Band for their first tour since 1988—the fact that there wasn't a new E Street album to support not mattering one whit. Extending the 1999 tour halfway into 2000, Springsteen and the new configuration of the E Street Band belied common notions of a nostalgia tour. They mixed new songs with old; fresh arrangements went side-by-side with resurrections of songs out of commission so long they seemed born again. By the end of the tour in New York, the only nostalgia evoked might have been for the Meadowlands stand the year before. The profusion hasn't stopped, with the holiday shows and new DVDs featured in this issue giving fans more present-day views of a Hall of Famer's career.

Springsteen's constant promise of life "right now" echoed something many fans have long felt: If he's *doing* it now, it's *about* the now. We've felt this as much out of frustration as faith, watching an artist occasionally outrun greatness in order to get to what was waiting over the rise. But Springsteen seems to feel it now, too, and as anyone who experienced "Two Hearts" on this tour knows, the immediacy that resonates in Springsteen's embrace of his own history is something to behold.

That embrace is well represented in both the live album and the concert film. It's evident by their very release. Springsteen made one other explicit promise on the recent tour: he proclaimed the E Street Band's rededication, and their commitment to serve. The regular "My Love Will Not Let You Down" opener—also kicking off the live album—emphasized that fans could take him at his word. Springsteen is making good on his promise—including its implication that the train wouldn't stop once they left the stage. Springsteen's recognition that the E Street Band has something vital to bring to his music was one thing. Continued, hard evidence of his pronounced commitment, to the band and to their fans, is another.

The E Street Band began performing together almost 30 years ago, and until this year had one official live album, at the halfway point, to show for it. The long-awaited follow-up, *Live in New York City*, officially documents a specific E Street tour for the first time. The concurrent *Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band* concert film is the first of its kind for Springsteen's entire career. Sure, I'd love Pearl Jam-style releases of complete shows, I'd love Grateful Dead *Dick's Picks*-style releases of classic shows from the vaults. But you've gotta start somewhere. Capturing the E Street Band at the climax of the reunion tour feels like the right place.

Maybe I'm high on anticipation, but it feels like a suitable response to the spirit in which *Live in New York City* and *Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band* are delivered. Over the years, *Backstreets* has often been a forum for constructive criticism. We're a magazine specifically for Springsteen fans—anyone reading these pages is going to be more than a casual listener—who know it's the little things that count. But it's also important to recognize the good things. There'll be plenty of time for any nits that need picking: we'll hash it all out next issue, after everyone has had a chance to live with the record for a while.

So, for all the chart-watchers, new DVD player owners, new HBO subscribers, and everybody who's been waiting for a new album since *Tom Joad*, let the fun begin. Enjoy the next couple of months. There should be even more to look forward to down the road, with Bruce and the Band already having logged studio time, and rumors of summer concerts in the air. But the *right now* is good enough. I've got my turntable working again and ready for that 3-LP set, and I'm expecting to hear Bruce coming over the radio any day now. New E Street Band songs *on the radio*? Yeah, so far the 21st century's looking pretty good.

LIVE REVIEWS: Bring 'em on! In addition to whatever else the future brings, we'll be focusing on the live album and concert film in issue #71. As usual, reader reviews will be a big part of our coverage. Send yours to *Backstreets*, PO Box 11079, Washington, DC 20008 USA; or e-mail to editor@backstreets.com.

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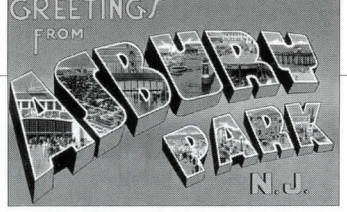


Asbury roots quintet signs to Epic

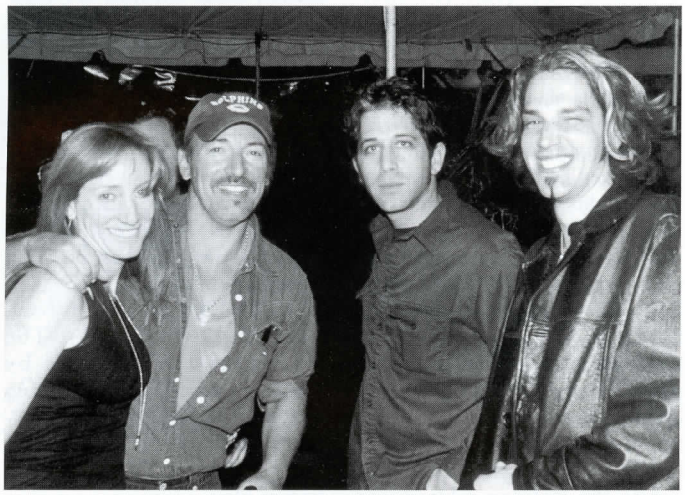
Samhill Moves On Up

By Robert Makin

On the eve of signing to Southside Johnny's old label, Epic Records, the rootsy quintet Samhill, featuring former members of the poppy trio Mr. Reality, chatted with me backstage at Tradewinds in Sea Bright. Winning several Asbury Park Music Awards in recent years, the group is vocalist Peter Scherer, guitarist-songwriter Gordon Brown, bassist Rob Tanico—the Mr. Reality members whose self-titled debut came out in 1992—plus drummer Dave Halpern, who backed Mr. Reality on tour, and veteran Jersey Shore guitarist Kevin Ansell.

This chat expresses how proud the members of Samhill, most of whom cut their teeth on Bon Jovi-like hard rock bands in the late '80s, are to be from Asbury Park. Perhaps the proudest moment came when Springsteen shared the stage with Samhill and several other young Asbury bands for the 11/3/00 Parkinson's Disease Foundation's "Light of Day" benefit in honor of Bob Benjamin.

For more info about Samhill, check out www.samhill.tv


BRIAN BERMAN PHOTO

Samhill's Peter Scherer and Gordon Brown with Patti and Bruce, 11/3/00.

You shopped the live show instead of a tape, yet you're capable of making an even better record. Whereas the typical concert-focused band nowadays has a tendency to blow off the recording process somewhat in favor of the live performance.

Gordon Brown: It's both for us. Our strength is becoming our live show because of doing these showcases the way we did them. It's so important these days to have a great live show and to have people walk out of there going, "I just saw the greatest fucking band."

In Mr. Reality, you worked with Danny Kortchmar. Have you considered bringing him in again?

Brown: Absolutely. We're going through producers right now, trying to figure who we want to work with, who'll be able to do it... to make sure the guy shares the right vision with us. You wouldn't believe the list. There's a guy by the name of Brian Paulson who's worked with Son Volt, Jayhawks. And there's Brendan O'Brien, who's worked with everybody.

Epic was Southside's first label. What do those records mean to you?

Peter Scherer: I've been in and out of all those albums, listening to all the guitar riffs and feelings and meanings to them, and they help cultivate us as musicians. Without those records, we wouldn't be the same musicians that we are. And then hearing all the stories over the years of how they recorded this guitar. How Steven came in and cranked the amp up loud as you could ever imagine to get the solo on "Hearts of Stone" that Richie (Sambora) took note-for-note for "I'll Be There for You." Only we would know that.

In recent years you guys have become fairly close with Springsteen and even more so with Patti. Are you going to ask them to work with you on this record in any way?

Peter Scherer: I talked to Patti about a week and a half ago. I was able to tell her everything that was going on, and she was very excited. She just felt that a lot of people don't realize how hard it is to get signed. The first thing I thought of was the millions of musicians who know how hard it is to get signed. We certainly haven't forgotten what it took to get here.

A second time. A lot of people don't get the first.

Rob Tanico: We're focused on what we're doing and what we want to do and not so overwhelmed. We're more precise about our decisions and the reality of the situation—and we're closer. It's an unbelievably great opportunity, and we're all really happy to be playing together.

Brown: That's the thread. We can look at each and say, "Thank God we're here together." We're family.

When you were in Mr. Reality, you couldn't mention Bruce. Now he's an icon, like Woody Guthrie and James Brown, and you can say, "Yeah, we come from Asbury Park."

Brown: Why lie? We wear it on our sleeve. I don't give a fuck what anyone says about where we come from. That's where we come from.

What's nice for you guys is that the Pony is back in a bigger way than it's been in about ten years. It was really great to see you share the mic with Bruce for the Light of Day benefit.

Brown: That's our home. We go there and we feel like we have our place, as I'm sure those guys did 20 years ago. Peter and I saw Bruce every time he played in that club in the '90s, be it with Southside, Jon Bon Jovi, Little Steven, or Joe Grushecky—or all of them together. It's made us realize how special this place is we come from. The impact this scene has had on the world is just astonishing, and whether you're a fan of the music or not, you can't help but notice what it has stood for through the years. It has made us feel like we belong to something, that we come from somewhere. We're walking on the same stage that these guys came from, and we're so proud of that.

How'd you like playing with Bruce that night?

Brown: When we were onstage for the big jam at the end of the night, I remembered Jon Bon Jovi once telling me about the first time he got to sing with Bruce and how special it was to him. Well, two choruses into "Twist and Shout," Bruce came over to us and there we were, singing together into the same mic. A moment I will never forget.

Scherer: We would like to jam with him more and get to know more about him as a person and an artist. But growing from his music is enough.... Samhill is on top of what we do. I was excited for Springsteen to be in the club that night to hear it. It was cool. It was exciting for the scene. And more than anything, it was acknowledging our good friend, Bob. That was an important reason to be there. I said to myself, "It's three o'clock in the morning, and we're all on the stage jamming. This is the way it ought to be."

E Street Band a "going concern"

Live at Last

By Christopher Phillips

Like a highway jammed with broken heroes, Springsteen's career has been littered with cast-offs, rejects, and projects that never came to fruition. Songs that couldn't find a place on albums, albums that couldn't find a place in Springsteen's story, and an immense backlog of live material, both audio and video, left stalled on the side of the road.

With each new rumored project, Springsteen fans generally adopt a believe-it-when-we-see-it attitude. Recently, we're seeing it. With *Tracks* in 1998, Springsteen began the process of airing the vaults, and maybe that's made him less inclined to let potential releases languish there. With a concert telecast and a live double album both seeing the light of day this spring, Springsteen is living up to his "rededication" of the band and their "commitment to serve." And with recent studio sessions—Bruce's first with the E Street Band since 1995—hopes are high that he'll keep it up.

DVD TO HBO—AND BACK?

At the end of the 1999-2000 tour, a concert DVD topped the hot-prospects lists for Springsteen's next move. Cameras filming the last few nights of the Madison Square Garden stand weren't exactly concealed, and Springsteen's "new live DVD" was understood to be in the works soon after that final stand was over. Industry reports cited both Toby Scott and Bob Clearmountain as working on the DVD project. *Prosound News* noted Springsteen working on 5.1 mixes in August, in a New York studio with Scott (and assistant engineer Ross Peterson); Bob Clearmountain mentioned that material to *Billboard* as an example of great-sounding live DVDs.

Everything seemed on target for a holiday release (November 21 was the date Sony was shooting for), when suddenly the DVD went off the radar. But while the holiday release was scrapped, the film itself wasn't—it merely found another avenue, and one that would presumably reach a bigger audience. On February 6, the *Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band* HBO special was announced, with an April 7 premiere date.

Culled from the last two nights of the tour, June 29 and July 1, the HBO concert will present 14 songs from Bruce and the E Street Band. Thirteen songs were originally announced; "Born to Run" was later added to the line-up. It's still not nearly a full show, but for a broadcast, that's to be expected; it's not quite in the order of performance, but it's close.

The press release quotes Nancy Geller, senior vice president of HBO Original Programming: "We have long wanted to have Bruce Springsteen on HBO, and the wait has been well worth it. Being a life-long fan of Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band, it was a passion of mine to bring this unrivaled performance to our subscribers." Geller told *Rolling Stone*, "It's shot the way Bruce performs, which is just in your face. There are moments when he really locks in with the band that are just magical."

A "teaser" promotional spot on HBO (and also on Bruce's website, www.brucespringsteen.net) suggests that she's right; we'll know for sure on April 7.

Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band will be presented in Hi-Definition, produced by Springsteen, Jon Landau and George Travis.

Chris Hilson, the director, has a good deal of concert experience, directing live video on two Boyzone tours, and directing concert films for Boyzone (*Live at Wembley*, 1996) as well as Wet Wet Wet (*Playing Away at Home: Live at Celtic Park*, 1997). The HBO special was edited by Thom Zimny, the tour's video director, who also worked as editor on John Lurie's "Fishing With John" series for TV and several feature films.

The audio credits feature more familiar names: produced by Springsteen and Chuck Plotkin, recorded by Scott, and mixed by Clearmountain.

While it is an HBO exclusive in the U.S., the concert film will show in other countries, including ZDF in Germany and The Movie Channel in Canada. In addition, a DVD isn't at all out of the question—far from it. HBO generally requires 60 days of exclusivity, but a home release could come as early as June. Sources suggest some of the band members were "perplexed" by the omission of "If I Should Fall Behind" from the HBO version, and they wouldn't be alone. But there's a chance that some of those gaps could be taken care of by this summer: While it's too early to say for sure, early buzz suggests that additional songs are indeed planned for a DVD edition.

FIRST LIVE E STREET ALBUM IN 15 YEARS

On the day of the HBO press release, Springsteen was in Portland, ME, mastering the live audio at Gateway Mastering Studio with Bob Ludwig. He spent February 6 and 7 there—"two long days," as Ludwig told Portland's News Center 6—and Ray Routhier reported in the *Portland Press Herald* that Bruce was working "on the soundtrack for a film of his concerts." Springsteen said, "Yeah, I'm just over at Bob's doing the music for this film." While he could have been referring to either a soundtrack album or simply the film's sound track, a press release on February 26 confirmed it: the two-disc *Bruce Springsteen and The E Street Band: Live In New York City* would be released on April 3.

Live in New York City is only the third live album of Springsteen's career, after the 1986 *Live/1975-85* box set and the 1993 *In Concert: MTV Plugged*; it's his second with the E Street Band. The album includes six songs not presented in the HBO version, for a total of 20 tracks. "Lost In The Flood," "Born in the U.S.A.," "Don't Look Back," "Jungleland," "Ramrod," and "If I Should Fall Behind" are all sequenced at the end of the set, preserving the order of the HBO songs and confirming the

LIVE IN NEW YORK CITY

DISC ONE	DISC TWO
My Love Will Not Let You Down	Tenth Avenue Freeze-out
Prove It All Night	Land of Hope and Dreams
Two Hearts	American Skin
Atlantic City	Lost in the Flood
Mansion on the Hill	Born in the U.S.A.
The River	Don't Look Back
Youngstown	Jungleland
Murder Incorporated	Ramrod
Badlands	If I Should Fall Behind
Out in the Street	
Born to Run	

14 songs also included in the HBO special

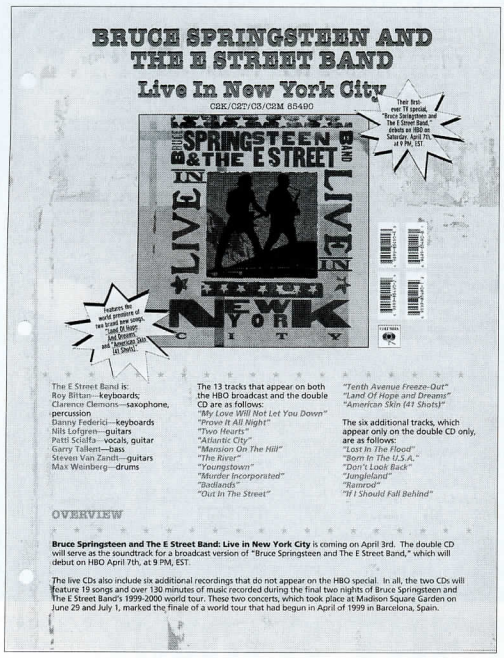
intent of the album. As Springsteen suggested and the Shore Fire press release confirmed, *Live in New York City* is intended to "serve as the soundtrack for a broadcast version of *Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band.*"

"Code of Silence," "Another Thin Line," and "Further On Up the Road" are absent from the live releases, but two of the tour's new songs appear on a recording for the first time: "American Skin" and "Land of Hope and Dreams." Twelve other tracks also make their live recorded debut with the E Street Band; of the album's 20 songs, only "Two Hearts," "The River," "Badlands," "Born in the U.S.A.," "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out" and "Born to Run" were also on the box set.

As on the HBO special, "Born to Run" came late to the album, announced on March 19 and squeezed on to the end of the first disc. Due to the last-minute addition, "Born to Run" will appear as a bonus track on early pressings, unlisted on the packaging. Some initial promo pressings did not contain the song at all. This late-comer became the first available song from the album, as brucespringsteen.net made the live "Born to Run" available for download in advance.

While this bonus track was clearly a last-minute addition, there has been much speculation that the album's six additional songs were also late considerations. A reputed track listing leaked in mid-February suggested the two CDs would present the same songs as the HBO special (13 at the time, without "Born to Run"), leaving roughly an hour of available space on the album and raising a hue and cry on the internet. Not long ago, fans compelled the release of "The Fever" and "The Promise" for the first time on 1999's *18 Tracks*—there's a good chance that fan opinion was again taken into account. A source close to Springsteen maintains that the live album's extended tracklist was planned from the outset, but label sources indicate that the album's initial format was indeed identical to the HBO line-up. Springsteen's publicist, Shore Fire Media, declined to comment.

Like *Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band*, all tracks on the live album are taken from June 29 and July 1 at Madison Square Garden, reportedly with no overdubs. As with the audio portion of the HBO special, *Live in New York City* was produced by Springsteen and Plotkin, recorded by Scott and mixed by Clearmountain. The two-CD set will be available on April 2 in Europe. Other formats planned are vinyl, cassette, MiniDisc, and Super Audio CD (a new format from Sony, similar to DVD Audio but requiring a different player).



IN THE STUDIO

Soon after the announcement of the live album, Springsteen convened the full E Street Band in the studio—but not for overdubs. The studio sessions took place at the Hit Factory in New York, NY, from Friday, March 2 through Tuesday, March 6. The first order of business was a studio version of "American Skin (41 Shots)," which was the impetus for the sessions. "Radio had asked for a studio version for some reason—maybe because of the length of (the live version)," Steve Van Zandt told Jay Lustig of the *Star-Ledger*.

"American Skin" was reportedly nailed in short order, completed by the end of the first day of the sessions. That left the weekend wide open for more, and Van Zandt confirmed, "...we did ["American Skin"], and we were fooling around (with other songs) a little bit." A source close to the band suggests that Springsteen "surprised them with brand new material" over the next few days, extending the sessions an extra day (they were originally planned to run through March 5), with the E Streeters "on fire... working 12 hours a day."

Steve made it clear that these aren't being considered album sessions per se, but the studio time at least provided "a very good start on some great new material. Whenever Bruce does decide to actually start doing a record, we have a real good start, rather than having to write the whole album from scratch. It's a nice way to go in."

When Lustig asked if the other new songs from the tour would be considered, Van Zandt replied, "I would think so, because those songs are very good. Obviously, Bruce writes a lot, so you never know. Songs do come and go."

As for the future, Steve stressed, "We haven't formally started anything or decided anything. But I'm certainly hoping that some time this year we'll get in (the studio) and do a record." Sources suggest that Springsteen has the band "on call" for more studio work in April and May; a summer tour has also been discussed, and that possibility lingers. Whatever the case, the future looks good for the E Street Band. In a March 15 interview (aired March 21 on HBO's "On the Record"), Bob Costas referred to the concert special when he asked, "Should people be taking a good long look because you might not pass this way again, with this group?"

Springsteen replied, "We're pretty young, y'know? *[Laughs]* I don't want to think about not passing this way again! *[Laughs]* I don't think so. There was no 'Farewell! We're goin'! We're not coming back!' There wasn't any of that. My intention is that the band is a going concern.... Hey, we gathered its power, redefined its presence, and to me, it's just exciting as a going concern."

the backstreets jukebox

1. Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band
"Born to Run" live
brucespringsteen.net (download)

2. Southside Johnny & the Asbury Jukes
Messin' with the Blues
Leroy (CD)

3. Badly Drawn Boy
The Hour of Bewilderbeast
Beggars Banquet (CD)

4. Marvin Gaye
What's Going On (Deluxe Ed.)
Motown (2CD)

5. Red House Painters
Old Ramon
Sub Pop (advance CD)

6. Pearl Jam
9/5/2000, Pittsburgh, PA
Sony/Epic (2CD)

7. PJ Harvey
Stories From the City, Stories From the Sea
Island (CD)

8. The Soft Boys
Underwater Moonlight
Matador (CD)

9. Van Morrison & Linda Gail Lewis
You Win Again
Virgin/Exile (CD)

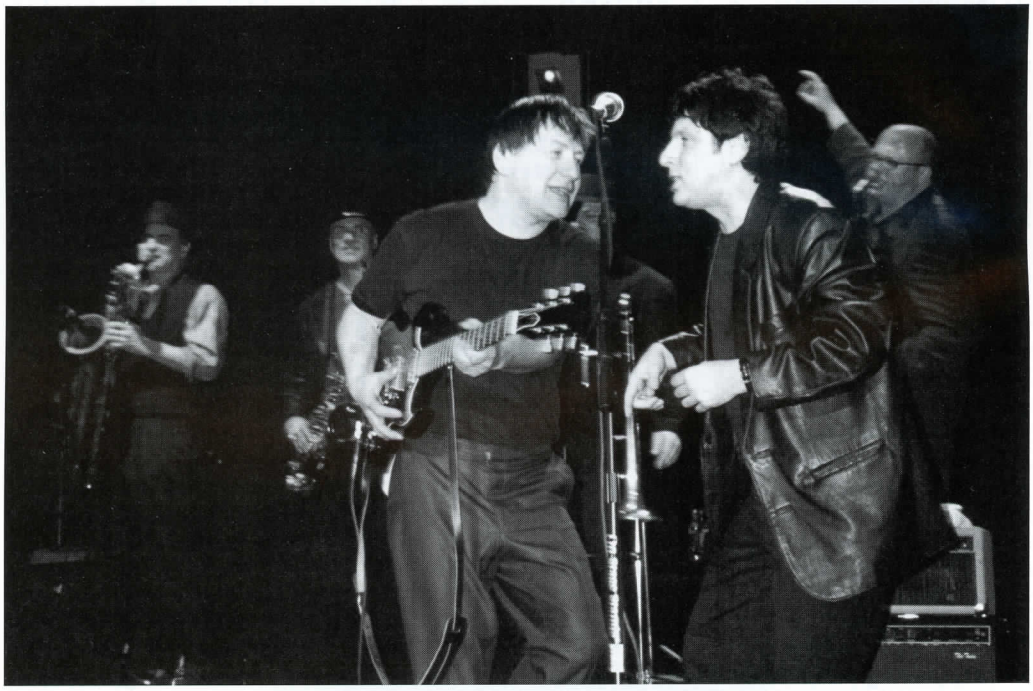
10. Outkast
Stankonia
Arista/La Face (CD)

10 Monster Discs to Play Today and Everyday

Better days are here again, 'cause...

Southside's Got the Blues

It's been a long time since Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes released Better Days. *So when Southside was preparing their first new studio album since 1991, it seemed like a good time for a (cyber-)chat.* **Maggie Powell**, *a* Backstreets *contributor and Jersey Shore Editor of the UK fan magazine* The Ties That Bind, *discussed* Messin' with the Blues *with Johnny over e-mail in November.*



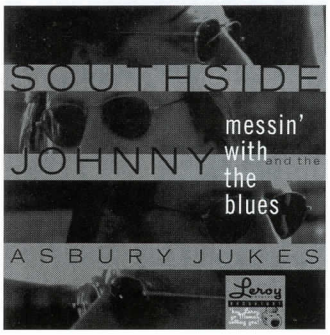
JOHN CAVANAUGH PHOTO

Southside, Bobby B., and the Jukes ring in the New Year in Red Bank, 12/31/00.

Old, new, borrowed and blues—a perfect way to introduce Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes' brand new CD, *Messin' with the Blues*. Comprising 14 songs, the CD features covers from artists like Memphis Slim, Percy Mayfield, Tom Waits and Kevin Gordon. There's also a composition by Garry Tallent and Henry Gross ("Sinful"), a couple of Southside Johnny original songs that were written some time ago plus the ones he wrote during the recording process. Describing the overall musical genre of the album Johnny said, "This is a record heavily influenced by my love for blues. But it is not a CD of 13 slow songs. There are some raucous, rocking R&B tracks here as well. We cover a lot of ground as far as musical styles go, but it all is based on the blues."

Is *Messin' With the Blues* **a "Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes" album, or just "Southside Johnny"?**

This is most definitely a Jukes album. Bobby (Bandiera, lead guitar), Jeff Kazee, (keys) Joey Stann (saxophone), Chris Anderson (trumpet), Eddie Manion (saxophone), LaBamba (trombone), and Mark Pender (trumpet) all play on it. We used Garry Tallent on bass, as he was there as producer and we hadn't settled on a permanent replacement for David Hayes, who was working with Van Morrison. The drummer is a nut called Chucki Burke, who drove me crazy, but played great!



Were your own songs written recently?

Only the songs "Living with the Blues" and "Satan's Shoes" were written some time ago. All of the rest of my tunes were literally written in the studio... we'd just start to wail and I would sing and make up words as we went along. Later I would refine or rewrite the lyrics, and come back and sing the new words. It was a great way to make a record... you never knew what was gonna happen.

Do you have a favorite track on the album?

I can't really say I have a single favorite. The thing I like most about this record is its tone. Garry knew that I wanted to try and capture the mood of all the classic blues I grew up listening to without it sounding like an academic exercise or a note-for-note recapitulation of some old 45. We did this by just letting the band play... no long rehearsals, not a lot of takes (three at most) and a minimum of overdubbing.

Some of the songs were just the germ of an idea, maybe a rhythm pattern or some chord changes, when we walked in the studio. Everyone contributed, and with musicians of this caliber who understand what you're trying to do, well... good things happen.

What inspired you to get back into the recording studio?

It had been eight years since the last record. I went through some bad times and really wanted never to record again. If you're not in good mental shape, the studio is a torture chamber, as it was during the making of "Trash It Up." Happily, after I moved to Nashville, I met some of the best people I have ever known, and I started to come out of my funk. And then there was Garry nagging at me. We had talked for years about making a record together, and now seemed the time. He had finished up his last producing project and had some free time. Of course, as soon as we got really involved, Bruce decided to tour with the E Streeters! I think he was afraid of the competition. That bum!

Apart from Garry Tallent producing the CD for you, who else was involved in the technical side of things?

The guy who really made it a joy to record was our engineer, Tim Coats. He's a sharp technician with a great sense of humor (luckily for him). We all got along swimmingly once he realized I wasn't truly that nasty; it was just my way of saying, "Hi! How the hell are ya!" He's as playfully sarcastic as I am, so he understood my sense of fun.

Were all of the songs recorded in the same place?

The basic tracks were done at Garry's studio in Nashville, Moon Dog. John Bongiovi let us use his place in New Jersey to do the horns. Thanks, Dot and John.

Has the fact that you're living in Nashville had any influence on the style of this new CD?

The only influence Nashville has had is in giving me a place to regroup away from the duties and expectations of living in New Jersey. I love N.J., but sometimes you need to step away from what you know to open yourself up to what you don't know... like, say, trigonometry.

Who came up with the idea for the artwork?

The artwork is being done by Bob Delevante, a good friend of mine who is also a terrific singer/songwriter. Everybody in Nashville is a singer/songwriter—even me. The photos were taken by my girlfriend, Lee Blankenship, and she actually lived through it. I hate taking pictures. Michelle Paponetti, an artist I met at a show years ago, is coordinating the whole shebang.

Judging from the interest in your website and in the SSJ Digest, it seems that your fan base has been energized by the internet. Has this had an impact on your career?

I think the internet is a godsend for artists like me who don't want to deal with record companies. It gives us a chance to reach all of the people who are or were fans, and it also is a great conduit to those who haven't heard what we do.

I also like the Napster idea. Who says rock stars have to all be millionaires, anyway? Isn't it enough to spend a life making music? All the money in the world can't buy you that feeling you get on stage, whether in a club in Jersey or in Wembley Stadium, when everything is right and the band and the audience are in sync. It's indescribable.

For more on Southside Johnny and Messin' With the Blues, *visit www.southsidejohnny.org*

12/31/00: Johnny's always got something up his sleeve.

JOHN CAVANAUGH PHOTO

UNDER THE COVERS

Southside on the whos and the whys

"Messin' Around with the Blues" A song recorded by the great blues singer, Memphis Slim. I first heard Slim do it on an old LP I bought for 98 cents in the mid-'60s. This and the other Slim song on the CD, "Mother Earth," were two of my favorite songs to sing for myself as I walked along the beach in Jersey. I used to practice on my one harmonica (that I had stolen from my brother) and sing to amuse myself. This is before I joined a band. At that time I had no ambition to be a musician, I just liked to sing.

"Come Home Little Girl" This one is from the B-side of an obscure 45. Garry and I were playing records from our collection, looking for material, and somehow this crazy thing jumped onto the turntable. Of course, as soon as we heard it, we knew we had to try it. We didn't let the band rehearse, just played it for them once and said, "Let's go!" By the way, that's an old friend, Steve Conn, on accordion—he thought we were all out of our minds.

"River's Invitation" This is another song I had heard a long time ago but had forgotten. It's by Percy Mayfield, a great singer/songwriter who was hugely influential back in the 40's and 50's. He was a favorite of Ray Charles, and I remembered the song when I found a copy of it (on Ray's label) in our collection. I played it for Garry, and he said, "You gotta do that song!" So we did.

"Cadillac Jack's # 1 Son" This was written and recorded by my favorite new songwriter, Kevin Gordon. It's the title track of his terrific CD out on Shanachie records (plug, plug). I hadn't planned on cutting it, but I wanted Kevin to play on the record because I loved the interplay he and Bobby had on guitar when we did the "acoustic" tour last year. So I asked Kevin, who lives just a few blocks from me, to come to the studio one night. When he got there, I, being me, couldn't think of any of the songs we did on tour! So they all sat around staring at me 'til I blurted out, "Oh, the hell with it.... do that &%#@% "Cadillac" song!" I didn't even know the words; Kevin had to recite 'em to me.

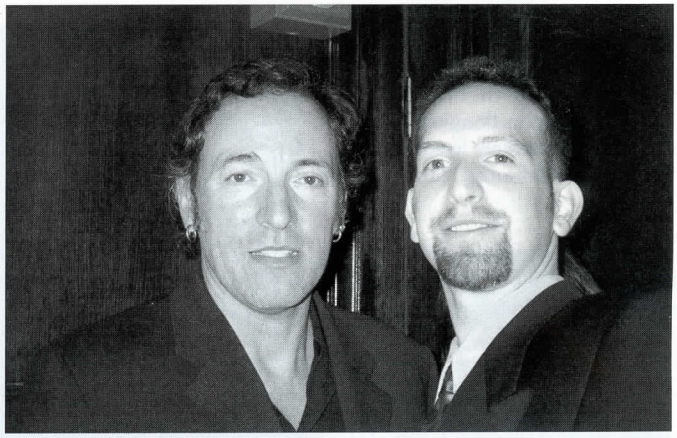
"Sinful" This is a song Garry wrote with Henry Gross. He played it for me on guitar, and I liked it enough to do it. Then, after we had cut it, Garry didn't like it, so I had to convince him to put it on the record. No one can ever say this record is over-produced.

"Gin Soaked Boy" A Tom Waits' tune. He's my favorite not-new songwriter. A cheerful little ditty about stalking and revenge. Oh, that Tom!

NO LIPS

HUMANITARIAN TOUCH: Performance-wise, Bruce Springsteen seems to have spent much of the winter (following the November 3, 2000, Light of Day benefit) in hibernation. But he's been spotted out and about, preparing live material for release and appearing at functions when the time—and the cause—is right. Springsteen was honored by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in December, accepting their Humanitarian Community Service Award. Bruce received the honor at the Greater Red Bank chapter of the NAACP's 45th Annual Freedom Fund dinner, held at Jacques Caterers on December 3. His name kept under wraps until that night, Springsteen was among a dozen honorees: local community leaders, young and old. Accepting the award, Bruce told those gathered, "Humanitarian is too big a word for what I do." As the *Asbury Park Press* reported, Bruce said he felt "empowered by music" as he was growing up, continuing, "I want my music to embody some of those same ideals.". . . On February 24, Bruce made what has become a regular appearance at this year's benefit for the Kristin Ann Carr Fund. The eighth annual fundraiser was held at the 200 Fifth Club in New York, with Max Weinberg also among the guests. The fund was created in 1993 to honor the memory of Kristen Ann Carr (daughter of Barbara Carr, Bruce Springsteen's co-manager) who died from Sarcoma; its mission is to aid in Sarcoma research, as well as to improve the quality of life for young people with cancer. For more information or to help, visit www.sarcoma.com. . . . Though there's no telling what will come of it, Springsteen's services have been requested for another cause, the Amadou Diallo Foundation. The *New York Post* reported in late February that Kadiatou Diallo, Amidou's mother, established the ADF "to offer scholarships to immigrant students and improve police and community relations," and was planning to ask Bruce to play a benefit. She called the inclusion of "American Skin" on the new live album "very good news... It will be a very good contribution for social justice.". . . "American Skin," officially released nearly a year after its performance debut, isn't the only musical lament inspired by the Amadou Diallo shooting. Wyclef Jean, formerly of the Fugees, sings "Diallo" on his latest album, *The Ecleftic: 2 Sides II a Book*. Jean, who moved to New Jersey from Brooklyn when he was 13, talked to the *Asbury Park Press* about his respect for the Boss: "I grew up with the music of Bruce Springsteen," Jean said. "When I was younger, my father used to work at a restaurant called Ramada Inn in Fairfield. We worked Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, and the bands that were playing in there, all they did was Bruce Springsteen covers. I just remember cleaning the toilets and listening to "Born in the U.S.A." You know, somehow it made me pick up my broom and broom faster because the voice of this guy sounded like a hard-working man—a construction worker!"

MAKING A LIST: The year 2000 came to a close, it was time for year-end polls, and there wasn't anything new from Springsteen. Or was there? Even though it received no airplay save Napster, "American Skin" still managed to make two high-profile singles lists. *Rolling Stone* critics picked the song as one of the best singles of the year, along with actual releases by Madonna and U2. What's this, 1985? Nah, Eminem and Outkast were there too. . . . "American Skin" was also Springsteen's highest-charting entry on the *Village Voice*'s annual "Pazz and Jop" music poll, cracking the top 40 on the Top Singles list. The Springsteen "single" tied for #33, with 15 votes. Three other Bruce tunes made the list: "My City of Ruins," "Riding in My Car," and "Land of Hope and Dreams" all tied for #421 with one vote each. . . . Q magazine's March issue picks Springsteen's *Songs* as one of the 50 greatest books about rock 'n' roll. . . . VH-1 has become a list-lovers paradise—hey, it's better than "reality" programming." On their Top 100 Albums list, *Born to Run* placed at number 27 and *Darkness on the Edge of Town* at 68. (The Beatles had five of the top 11, with *Revolver* at number one.) The Beatles also topped the Top 100 Rock Artists list, which ranked Bruce at number 26. His best VH-1 chart performance came via *Money* magazine, who teamed up with the network for "Music And Money: Top of the Charts." They ranked the Top 25 rock/pop artists of the year according to revenues, "star power" and "money power." N'Sync topped this one, with Bruce at number 19, for what it's, er, worth. . . . In March, the Recording Industry of America (RIAA) and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) released their "Songs of the Century" list. With 365 songs from the last hundred years, Judy Garland's version of "Over the Rainbow" took the number one slot. Picked by voters "from all walks of life," the list has Bruce at #59 and #135, for "Born in the U.S.A." and "Born to Run," respectively. He *has* written songs without "Born" in the title, y'know.



Bruce with Backstreets *subscriber David Jaffe, 2/24/01.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID JAFFE

NOTHIN' BUT NET: The official site brucespringsteen.net has finally been more active of late, with an HBO teaser clip and live previews available weeks before of the live album. But why isn't it brucespringsteen.*com*? Bruce lost his "cybersquatting" case in early February to Jeff Burgar's "Bruce Springsteen Club," as he "failed to demonstrate that the domain name was registered and has been used in bad faith." The ruling came from the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), which has handled more than 2000 such cases filed in the year or so. Eighty percent of them generally result in a site transfer, but Springsteen joins Sting in the unfortunate minority. . . . Less than a year after the 5/27/00 Las Vegas show with the E Street Band, Clarence Clemons returned to perform at the MGM Grand—but this time he was the boss. Running through such songs as "You're a Friend of Mine" and "Paradise by the C," Clarence led the house band for the Ninth Annual ESPY Awards, broadcast live from Las Vegas on February 12. Considering all the athletes in the crowd, the Big Man said, "I feel very small tonight," but there was nothing small about the gig, hosted by Samuel L. Jackson. . . . Another E Streeter popped up on TV during the post-tour break, performing in Washington D.C. for a Special Olympics Christmas benefit. Garry Tallent joined the house band for this TNT broadcast, holding down the bottom end for musical guests like Jon Bon Jovi, Stevie Wonder, Wyclef Jean, and Sheryl Crow. . . . Steve Van Zandt, of course, continues to bring his own brand of bada-bing to the small screen in the third season of *The Sopranos*. A recent story on the HBO series even brought Silvio Dante to the cover of *Rolling Stone*. The cover story had some new insights into how show creator David Chase picked him for the show, and how their sensibilities align. Steve says, "You know, you are walking round the corner and waiting to get hit by that bus. You know it's coming sooner or later. I know that sounds pessimistic, but I think it's a realistic view of just how miserable this planet is. I mean, let's face it: Life sucks. If you don't see that, you're fucking blind. That's my view, and I think perhaps David shares that sentiment to some extent." As ever, the Voice of America.

—Christopher Phillips

MARK R. SULLIVAN PHOTO

A Holiday Gift For You

By Andrew E. Massimino

Past, Present, and Future Collide For Two Magical, Charitable Nights

THIS ONE CAME STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART. From the moment Bruce Springsteen sat down at the piano on the evening of December 17, 2000, the impetus for this unprecedented two-night holiday benefit stand was put simply: "I came for you." And fans came from all over the world to be part of it.

At a few minutes past nine in the evening, on a brutal and relentless Asbury Park winter night, a band of merrymen took the cheerfully decorated stage, and the horns began to sound. For those without tickets lingering outside Convention Hall, it must've sounded like a junior high Christmas pageant, replete with the cacophony of notes bent slightly in the wrong direction and a plodding tempo that would've challenged any music teacher's patience. Inside, it was glorious. For among those signaling the start of something special were Dan Federici on the Excelsior Midi accordion, Garry (the real Dubya) Tallent on tuba, and the amazing horn section from the Max Weinberg 7.

As they hammed up their dirge-like take on "Jingle Bells," Bruce quietly entered stage left and sat down at the piano. The packed house of 2300 was stunned when the opening notes of "For You" settled on their ears, and many sang along for its soulful, slowed entirety. It was a beautiful and moving version of a song played five times during the 132-date 1999-2000 tour, but not like this. With only the spirit-filled Red Headed Women (Soozie Tyrell, Patti Scialfa, and Lisa Lowell) on backing vocals and Bruce on piano, this wordy gem from 1972 was reinterpreted as a simple message to all those in attendance and the charitable organizations their presence supported. This theme of giving back to a sustaining, responsive community would flow throughout these two evenings. If charity begins at home, then faith and hope must be the foundation. It took all three, plus the efforts of many unnamed soldiers to bring about two of the most unique and thrilling shows Springsteen has performed in over ten years.

Billed as "Bruce Springsteen with the Max Weinberg 7 and Friends," the two-night stand raised funds for eight local charities and organizations, and affirmed Springsteen's rededication and ongoing commitment to his lifelong community.

Driving into that community late Sunday afternoon, fans arriving from points south and west were treated to an amazing pre-show spectacle. The symbolism was thick, as scattered rain and gray skies evolved into a stunning rainbow that seemed to lead directly to the shore. With tickets in hand, it was difficult not to conjure up a "pot of gold" motif, especially when Route 18 turned north and the beautiful arch of color, like New Jersey's star of Bethlehem, pointed directly down upon the "Asbury Park/66" exit sign. In a world of cynicism, approaching a "city of ruins" it was downright fairy tale. At the very least it was a sign of the special night to come.

Still, a bit of faith and fortitude were necessary, as the disparaging forecast for the Shore held true. Freezing rain and bone-chilling winds greeted ticketholders and ticket-hopefuls alike, while waiting for the doors to the Convention Hall to open. Once inside and through all checkpoints, fans reviewed the smartly dressed stage filled with the symbols of the season. A handsome tree with all the trimmings offset a large wreath hung from the backdrop, which itself was heartily sprinkled with star-like lights. The following night, reportedly at Bruce's request, two menorahs were placed on platforms at either end of the stage, another sign of the tweaking and attention to detail that has enhanced Springsteen's reputation. Ringing from the hall's PA system, the classic holiday collection from Phil Spector, *A Christmas Gift for You,* was played on a loop—that just kept looping for two hours. By 8 p.m., an eager crowd grew restless. Then the lights dimmed.

Truth be told, no one had a clue what to expect. The recent tour had ended well over five months prior on a very high note, and Bruce had very few performances since, most notably November 3 at the Stone Pony for the Light of Day Foundation benefit. When these holiday concerts were announced, speculation over the specifics began in earnest. The only safe bets were sold-out shows, plenty of fundraising, and likely renditions of "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" and "Merry Christmas Baby" (the two recorded Christmas songs in the Springsteen canon). That left room for a few surprises, but no one could've predicted the show that Springsteen and Friends presented these two nights.

Rousing applause greeted Bruce after his six-and-a-half minute, carefully delivered version of "For You." On a night that featured the graciously donated efforts of every member of the E Street Band, the entirety of the Max Weinberg 7, old friends (Southside Johnny Lyon), new friends (Marah), six holiday tunes, old songs resurrected, and new

MARK R. SULLIVAN PHOTO

HOLIDAYS WITH FRIENDS

December 17 & 18, 2000

Jingle Bells
For You
Blue Christmas
Powerhouse
Run Run Rudolph
Lucky Town
E Street Shuffle
Kitty's Back
Rose
As Long as I (Can Be with You)
This Time It's for Real
Until the Good Is Gone
All I Needed Was You
Shine Silently
Merry Christmas Baby
So Young and In Love
Roll of the Dice
Bobby Jean
(Christmas) Baby, Please Come Home
My City of Ruins
I Don't Wanna Go Home
Rosalita
Santa Claus is Comin' to Town

December 18 soundcheck

Jambalaya (On the Bayou)
Hey, Good Lookin'
Mystery Train

KEN LESNIK PHOTO

songs debuted, Springsteen had the crowd counting their blessings after just one number. He walked over to center stage, strapped on his black acoustic guitar and said, "Good evening, Asbury Park. Welcome to the holiday show." Soozie Tyrell, a longtime collaborator and friend, picked up her fiddle, Garry grabbed a stand-up bass, and with Max keeping simple time they launched into a straight country version of "Blue Christmas." New Jersey stalwart Bobby Bandiera joined the Women for some background vocal duties, but it was Scialfa's beautiful harmonies that drove the song. As Bruce had some fun copping Elvis here and there, Patti joined him at the center mic, the married couple smiling throughout. After one false ending, Bruce expanded his greeting in a country-tinged affect, "Good evenin' everybody and welcome to the fabulous Asbury Park Convention Hall!" This song set the fun-lovin' holiday mood that permeated the rest of the evening.

Then, in a gesture that spoke volumes about the true spirit of these shows, Springsteen turned the controls over to Max Weinberg and his bandmates from *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*. It might have seemed a bit early in the night for the main attraction to yield to the supporting cast. No doubt this was Bruce's show, but he established a pattern early on whereby everyone on stage would get a chance to shine. The Max Weinberg 7 (Jimmy Vivino, Richie "La Bamba" Rosenberg, Mark Pender, Scott Healy, Michael Merritt, and Jerry Vivino, with Ed Manion) swung right into groove on the ultra-boppin' "Powerhouse," which is curiously absent from their 17-song debut CD. The audience showed the tight-knit group great appreciation, snapping their fingers and bobbing their heads, while a few brave swing dancers searched for room to twirl.

Vivino, the MW7 guitarist who also handled the arrangements for many of the night's songs, was then given the spotlight for a scorching rendition of Chuck Berry's "Run Run Rudolph." With Bruce back on stage, he and Vivino traded blistering licks and vocals, each one seemingly upping the ante with his successive turn. As the energy built it was easy to forget that this was, in fact, a Christmas song. The horn section gave it a nice full sound, but the show was definitely downstage, as Bruce's facial expressions and body language gave a glimpse back at what 1975 must've resembled for those in the crowd not old enough to remember. Shaking his head as he sang, with wild eyes and grin, Springsteen's sense of fun seemed equal parts measured silliness and true rock 'n' roll joy.

The emotions were quite different as the same lineup next tore into a gritty "Lucky Town." The accomplished Vivino provided accompanying vocals and guitar, again trading off leads, and nailed it like it was his own tune. On these two vastly different songs it's worth noting how well Vivino and Springsteen complemented each other, and how comfortable they appeared conversing musically. The mighty Max also distinguished himself, pounding with such mad intensity he was almost screaming. It was obvious how much he appreciated the opportunity to drive this one home. Furthermore, as the chorus kept making its way around, it was evident that the horns were the special treat here—an inspired arrangement taking full advantage of that big brass sound. Playing counter-melodies not fully apparent in the recorded original, La Bamba and Co. gave enhanced meaning to the line "I'm gonna lose these blues I found." If there were any anticipatory holiday blues still present in the audience after that song, they were unquestionably shaken loose by the two numbers that followed.

"Got the old baton here...tune it up fellas," maestro Springsteen instructed the horns. The jarring notes that followed had some in the hushed crowd thinking it might be "Jingle Bells, part deux." It wasn't. After a dramatic pause, the telltale progression that kicks off "The E Street Shuffle" brought roars of approval, and Bruce's breezy guitar work had sparks flying once more. Danny took his rightful spot at the Hammond B-3, and one of those songs with a funky break had everybody forming lines, waving arms, and singing any words they remembered. Faithful to the recorded version from 1973, the song's coda referenced Curtis Mayfield's "Move On Up," and helped establish the aura of a hometown soul revue.

Amid the fervor of such a Springsteen rarity getting a full brass workout, the follow up punch was overwhelming. After a 22-year performance hiatus, "Kitty's Back" resurfaced, the wailing guitar intro greeted by the crowd with looks of disbelief, bordering on confusion. The *Backstreets'* 1999-2000 Tour Readers' Poll, on the presses at concert time, listed it as the number one request—by a nearly two-to-one margin over its nearest competitor—of any song not played on the tour. Before the ink could dry, those prayers had been answered. With only two days of rehearsal, the Max Weinberg 7 and surrounding members of the E Street Nation handled the many nuances of the complex song. Many band members stepped up front on this one, led by Dan Federici's groovin' organ solo. Each horn member

DELIVER ME FROM NOWHERE: "My City of Ruins"

By Chris Nelson

Almost 30 years after releasing his first album, Bruce Springsteen has penned a protest song.

Sure, he's written political pieces before. *Backstreets* readers could stuff a small ballot box with the titles they can rattle off their heads: "Roulette," "Johnny 99," "Born in the U.S.A.," "Streets of Philadelphia," "The Ghost of Tom Joad," and others.

But there's a difference here. "My City of Ruins," which Springsteen debuted at the two December benefit concerts in Asbury Park, is an old-fashioned, rally-the-masses-to-get-off-their-asses incitement.

That component to the song is woven into so many elements we're accustomed to that it doesn't necessarily jump out as a leap for Springsteen. Indeed, several ingredients are so familiar they make "My City of Ruins" play something like a primer on Springsteen's career.

The horns that open this Sunday-morning tune were recruited straight from a Saturday night in 1973, when big R&B arrangements shot street-corner soul into Springsteen's stories. The focus here on a community—and more importantly on our personal relations to places—courses throughout Springsteen's songbook, from *Greetings from Asbury Park, N.J.* to *The Ghost of Tom Joad.* The reverent religious stance (as opposed to the angry stabs at religion from early in his career) has ties to work released since *Human Touch.*

And then there's the "blood red circle, on the cold dark ground," the song's striking first image. It could be a pool of blood, literally, or it could be more vaguely just a bad omen. Whichever, it's clearly not good, making it the mirror opposite of a sign in another Springsteen song about heritage and home. In "This Hard Land," the singer is looking for a stable foundation, somewhere "where the sun could break through the clouds and fall like a circle/A *circle of fire* down on this hard land." In Johnny Cash's "Ring of Fire" (written by his then-future wife June Carter and Merle Kilgore), the circle is a place of passion. For Springsteen in "This Hard Land," a piece he called "a shot of idealism" in *Songs,* the circle of fire signifies love, but it's the spiritual, familial love we find wherever it is we call home.

The blood red circle in "My City of Ruins" suggests anything but that. In fact, the singer ultimately professes his love and faith in the town, but it's expressly despite the fact that passion has been drained from these city streets, that the buildings are boarded up and the congregation has quit its pews.

It's within these familiar contexts that Springsteen wades into uncharted waters. The fervid chorus call to "Come on, rise up!" appears initially after the second verse closes with the vision of a man "down on his knees." It turns up again after the prayer-filled bridge, which itself follows a verse where the singer is abandoned by his lover. (This could actually be the same person who's singing Springsteen's other recent lost-love R&B number, "Back in Your Arms.")

The summons to rise up, then, is in part aimed specifically at the brother on his knees—a lyric of support, an urging to heal thyself. It could serve the same purpose, directed inward, for the singer who's just lost his love.

But it's more than that. Taken within the confines of poverty that open the song, this is a call to the broader public. While it's often limiting to bring the artist into the art, it's worth noting for a moment that "My City of Ruins" first appeared at concerts to benefit substance abuse programs, a women's center, kids' programs and food banks in the Jersey Shore area. These "hometown" shows in recent years—since Springsteen moved from Los Angeles back to New Jersey—have become almost regular benefit events, where he takes action the best way he knows how: not just by writing a check, but raising the money by putting himself back into the community for a common event. And in one sense, he puts himself in the song as well: it's "My city," and at these benefit concerts, he claimed that ownership in his old running grounds of Asbury Park.

But the song is hardly about a single town; Springsteen might as well be saying "Our cities." In that light, the refrain to "rise up!" becomes a public exhortation. And that's what makes "My City of Ruins" Springsteen's first old-fashioned protest song, distinct not just from the similarly themed "My Hometown," but his entire catalog. It's altogether different from his typical political work, which is to say the character observation of such songs as "Shut out the Light" or "Galveston Bay."

Springsteen, an activist artist who nevertheless rarely calls directly on listeners to take political stands, is demanding action. The very sentence "Come on, rise up!" is, in grammatical terms, an imperative: it's not an observance or request, it's an order. It's the difference between noting that "the answers my friend, are blowin' in the wind," and commanding "you better start swimmin' or you'll sink like a stone, for the times they are a-changin'." The only thing that's come close in Bruce's catalog is "Badlands," and its decree to "live it every day."

"My City of Ruins" is a call to the nation to heal not just our cities, but to our brothers and sisters and ourselves, to do the hard work hinted at by the image of hands that dominates the song's bridge. Where Springsteen will take this achievement artistically is anybody's guess. The fact that he's never traveled this road before makes it all the more compelling.

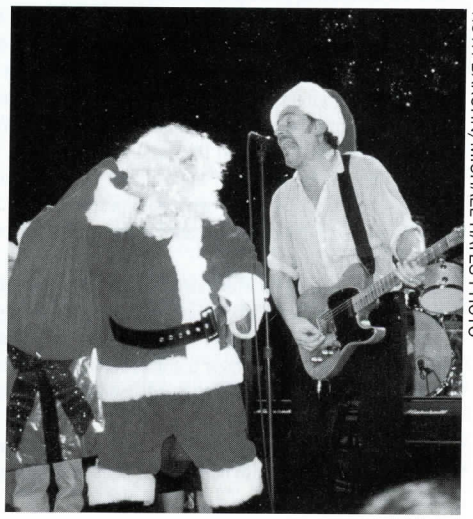
"Deliver Me from Nowhere" is a new column that analyzes Springsteen's music and lyrics, past and present. Chris Nelson is a Seattle-based writer whose work has appeared in the Chicago Tribune, Rolling Stone, *sonicnet and the* Village Voice.

got a turn to stretch a little, and when Bruce asked, "Who's that coming up the avenue? Who's that coming up Kingsley?" the baddest horn-blower of them all, Clarence Clemons, made his grand entrance in dark shades to the audience's delight. It was another playful moment on a night full of surprises.

As the electricity from those two songs lingered in the hall, the show shifted directions yet again and Ms. Scialfa took center stage for two acoustic numbers. Bruce joked, "I get to back Patti up now. She's been waiting for this a long time!"—just as her fans have waited a long time for the follow-up to her 1993 debut, *Rumble Doll.* Bobby Bandiera returned to play some rhythm guitar and sing backup on Patti's new song called "Rose," a Rickie Lee Jones-meets-Ronnie Spector mid-tempo number slated for her next record. In it Scialfa sings, "I traveled once in a rock n' roll band, and my baby was hero in a small town local bar." They picked up the pace and Springsteen picked up his electric guitar for "As Long as I (Can Be With You)," off Scialfa's lone LP release. With her red-headed partners at her side, Ms. Scialfa proved that her songwriting talents are worthy of her voice.

The roll call continued as Bruce next brought out Steve Van Zandt and "the inimitable Grinch" Southside Johnny Lyon, and the transition from coffeehouse to seashore bar was underway. With horns blaring, all three traded vocals on "This Time It's for Real," often at the same microphone. And just like that it was a Jersey thing. Together with Little Steven's garage anthem, "Until the Good is Gone," and Lyon's '60s throwback "All I Needed Was You," this three-song mini-set had the feel of an afternoon jam session in a warehouse full of friends. By the end, Springsteen's shirt was soaked through, and "a benefit concert" had turned into a Christmas party.

"Isn't this great?" When called onstage for his first appearance of the night, "the greatest guitarist in rock and roll," Nils Lofgren, had the understatement of the night.



RUTH BAROHN/MICHAEL HAYES PHOTO

KEN LESNIK PHOTO

Nils' work with the E Street Band has always been understated and underrated, so it was appropriate that he took this opportunity to perform his touching power ballad "Shine Silently." On top of a number of solo projects, it's exactly what he's done at Springsteen's side for the last 16 years. With Bruce and Patti backing him up—and looking on with affection and admiration—Lofgren ripped off a blistering solo to end the song.

The two guitar legends embraced, but Nils remained onstage as Bruce called out for the rest of the E Streeters, joined for the first time in the evening by pianist Roy Bittan. One of those previously mentioned sure bets took flight—"cause you know what time it is!"—as the Professor's intro to "Merry Christmas Baby" produced the night's first red Santa hat from the crowd. With the entire E Street Band onstage together for the first time since July, this holiday staple moved seductively as Springsteen was at his relaxed, bluesy best. Night two of these shows had the 51 year-old rocker jumping rope with the mic cord, striking a rapper pose, and trading off barbs with his strawberry sidekicks. "I want what's under that tree!" beckoned Bruce. And while thrusting his hips, "Here comes Santa... right down Santa Claus lane!"

From the ridiculous to the... well, insane, as Springsteen announced between numbers, "It's about to get crazy in here. We haven't done this one for a long, long time." With the stage packed, accommodating every musician who had appeared thus far, the *Tracks*-resurrected oldie "So Young and In Love" was given its first live workout ever. Originally performed as "A Love So Fine," the 1998 box set presented a reworked version, and its performance here once again harkened those playful days of the mid '70s. Flanked by the wailing Clemons and the Groucho-esque Van Zandt, Bruce playfully guided the threesome to center stage, where they repeatedly approached the mic like they were discovering amplification for the first time. It was a thrilling moment, but not without its mishaps. As the song wound down, the apparent idea was to roll it right into "Roll of the Dice." On night two, Bruce would announce, "We always fuck it up right here," and sure enough the transition was blown both times. Few noticed, and no one offstage cared.

Recovering on a four count, the now massive band presented a rollicking "Dice." Amazingly, someone in the crowd on night one actually brought a pair of fuzzy dice, which managed to find its way onstage midway through the song. With the setlist speculation focused on a holiday theme, some person not only predicted "Roll of the Dice," a song performed three times in the past seven years, but even thought to bring the prop. (Where were they when I was picking my NCAA pool?)

After a straightforward "Bobby Jean," Springsteen led the troops, now including longtime manager and producer Jon Landau strumming an acoustic guitar, directly into the classic Yuletide plea "(Christmas) Baby, Please Come Back Home." The standout track from the aforementioned Spector album, 1963's original version featured the legendary Darlene Love. The song contains a great call-and-response that leads to a mighty crescendo, and this is the only place all night where the Red-Headed gals fell a bit flat, unable to follow Springsteen's direction. Each did take a turn out front, however, and Tyrell's booming voice redeemed any misgivings. It was a rousing way to end the main set.

Springsteen returned to the stage alone and took a few minutes to thank everyone who participated. On night two, he spoke lovingly about "a community of

Sweet Charity

Whether intentionally or by elegant fortuity, the eight organizations to benefit from Bruce Springsteen's holiday shows seem perfectly in sync with the defining moment of both shows, the premiere of his powerful statement on the spirit of Asbury Park, "My City of Ruins."

Struggling on a daily basis to restore hope and human dignity, these eight groups confront a range of problems which disproportionately affect a high percentage of Asbury Park's 18,000 residents—hunger, domestic violence, alcohol and drug addiction, inadequate health care, sexual abuse, and the debilitating consequences of HIV.

By donating to the Food Bank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties, Springsteen renewed a long-standing commitment to the anti-hunger campaign. Many of his other contributions, however, involve Springsteen with an expanding group of front-line Asbury activists. Three donations—to Substance Abuse Resources, Epiphany House and the Women's Center of Monmouth County—support organizations which fight the consequences of drug and alcohol addiction and domestic violence. A fourth, to The Center in Asbury Park, supports services to people affected by the HIV virus, while another supports healthcare for uninsured residents at the Parker Family Health Clinic.

The one contribution which signals a partial turn-around in Asbury conditions was to the Boys & Girls Club of Monmouth County. Springsteen had previously donated a computer lab to the Club, only to see the equipment stolen. The theft helped trigger a drastic reorganization of the Club, which is once again providing a healthy educational and recreational environment for Asbury Park youth.

While the size of Springsteen's donations to the groups was not publicly disclosed, Springsteen also donated ten pairs of tickets to an auction conducted on-line by the Asbury Park Chamber of Commerce (www.asburyparkchamber.com). Asbury Park activist Kate Mellina, who had first proposed the shows to Springsteen, and to whom he dedicated "My City of Ruins," said the auction raised over $60,000 more for the eight organizations.

Just in time for Christmas, staff, volunteers and people served by the eight organizations sent Springsteen a box of thank you letters, in sharp contrast to a muckraking tirade by the weekly *The Tri-City News*, which condemned "My City of Ruins" for drawing attention to existing conditions in Asbury Park. *Tri-City* editors, known also for attacking Robert DeNiro's filming of "City By The Sea" in Asbury Park and for denouncing the Save Tillie campaign, admitted they had neither heard the song or read all of its lyrics before their attack.

You can obtain information about, or make contributions to, these organizations by writing:

The Center in Asbury Park, 806 Third Avenue, Asbury Park, NJ 07712
Epiphany House, 300 Fourth Avenue, Asbury Park, NJ 07712
The Greater Asbury Park Chamber of Commerce, PO Box 649, Asbury Park, NJ 07712
Substance Abuse Resources, 1806 Highway 35, Oakhurst, NJ 07755.
Boys & Girls Club of Monmouth County, 1201 Munroe Ave., Asbury Park, NJ 07712
Food Bank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties, 516 Passaic Avenue, Spring Lake, NJ 07762
Parker Family Health Clinic, PO Box 2189, Red Bank, NJ 07701
Women's Center of Monmouth County, 1 Bethany Road, Bldg. 3, Suite 42, Hazlet, NJ 07730

MARK R. SULLIVAN PHOTO

musicians that have been together and around each other for the better part of 25 years and longer." He continued, "It's a very unique thing, you know, and I feel blessed to have it around me... All the relationships that I've sustained... to have all these people around me at this point of my life, and to come out at the drop of a call...."

Then, while listing every organization benefiting from the concert, and briefly commenting on their respective purpose and goals, Springsteen received thunderous applause when stating that health care should be "every citizen's right in the United States." He went on to talk about the efforts of the Asbury Park Chamber of Commerce and the town's resurgence—new businesses appearing, Victorian homes being refurbished, and a grassroots effort building up steam. In the one move no one could have predicted, Bruce then introduced a new song called "My City of Ruins," and dedicated it to Asbury's Kate Mellina, co-owner of Cleopatra Steps Out with husband Dave Christopher and chief instigator behind the idea for these concerts.

After a plaintive horn intro, Springsteen was back where he began the show, alone at the piano. For two verses the singer painted a bleak picture of "boarded up windows... hustlers and thieves," then implored his city to "C'mon, rise up!" Moving to center stage, Bruce put on a guitar as the narrative shifted, and as the singer's focus changed to a love now in ruins he wondered, "How do I begin again?" It's a beautiful and inspiring song, another sign that Springsteen's eye for detail and his soulful roots are still flourishing.

It's hard to believe that Bruce didn't just say, "Thank you and goodnight" after such a powerful performance. Instead he went calling out for Southside again. On night two he might have regretted it, as the legendary troublemaker seemed to cop an attitude while playfully throwing all of the Boss' guitar picks into the crowd. Little Steven joined in the fun for "I Don't Want to Go Home," after which Springsteen asked the audience, "Are you ready to salsa... *Jersey-style?*" With Danny, Garry, and the rest of the E Street band joining Max's well-worked group on stage, the frenzy level was upped yet again. Ladies and gentlemen, "Rosie" came out tonight, and had many wondering why she's not been around much lately. One sign of the answer might've appeared on night two, when a virtual band meltdown almost killed the song in its 28-year old tracks. But they pulled themselves out of the muck, and perhaps "Rosalita" will get out to dance more often.

Speaking of getting out to dance, quite a few of the advertised "friends" saved their appearances until the night's last song, the obligatory "Santa Claus is Coming to Town." Bruce was loose and looked comfortable playing the holiday host. The stage filled to capacity as Springsteen's Mom, aunts, kids, and other various friends joined with representatives from Save Tillie, the Count Basie Learning Center, and many of the evenings charitable groups to help sing and toss out hundreds of candy canes. The Philly-based group Marah appeared unannounced, just thrilled to be sharing the stage with Bruce and to be part of the entire spectacle. And what a spectacle it was: Adele Springsteen and her son traded off lyrics, a guy dressed in a reindeer suit danced arm in arm with Santa Claus, and kids dressed like Santa's helpers hurled candy at the crowd with vigor. By the end, no one onstage could even see Bruce for direction, and the song was cut short because of it. It was as crazy as it was joyous.

And like every Springsteen concert for the past 30 years it was a lot of other things, too: poignant, touching, raucous, silly, inspiring, unifying, challenging, fun, and hard to predict. With so many surprises along the way, these two nights, even without the context of the charitable acts involved, might go down as two of the standout shows in a long and storied career still in progress.

Night two brought the same setlist, song for song, but early arrivals were treated to their own pre-show spectacle, perhaps the most unique treat of all. Nearly two hours before showtime, Springsteen appeared onstage to test out a few of the sound settings. He instructed the audience to go ahead and "keep talking," but realizing that wasn't going to happen, Springsteen proceeded to lead the Red Headed Women, Southside Johnny, Garry Tallent and others through a three-song soundcheck before the flabbergasted crowd. After a rousing version of Hank Williams' "Jambalaya," Bruce welcomed everybody to the "Asbury Opry." The makeshift ensemble then meandered its way through another Williams tune, "Hey Good Lookin'," and finally Elvis Presley's "Mystery Train," featuring Southside on harmonica. For years, fans have looked upon soundcheck as one of the lesser-known frontiers of the Springsteen experience. This glimpse into the process certainly marked December 18, 2000 as an extra-special night for a thousand or so fans.

Springsteen has always given much of himself, both on and off the stage. And he's never been shy about asking for a commitment from his audience. Over the course of the last three years, the extent of that give-and-take has been reclaimed and revised as Springsteen continues to re-examine his relationship with the community he serves. Charity is a two way street, for when it is given it must also be received. With Springsteen's guidance, many people donated their talents and efforts to create such a unique and timely gift. On two December nights, this gift was received by many adoring fans. Over many Decembers to come, this gift will be appreciated by all those benefiting from the generosity and spirit of the nights. Call it one of the ministries of rock and roll.

Been switching 'round and 'round 'til half-past dawn? Don't take a shotgun to that teevee set just yet. Kicking off 2001 are the first two official Springsteen DVD titles (with hopes high for a third later in the year), reason enough to get all nice and friendly with the couch. *Backstreets* takes a closer look at Bruce's latest TV Movies: the reissue of *Blood Brothers* and the expanded *Video Anthology 1978-2000.*

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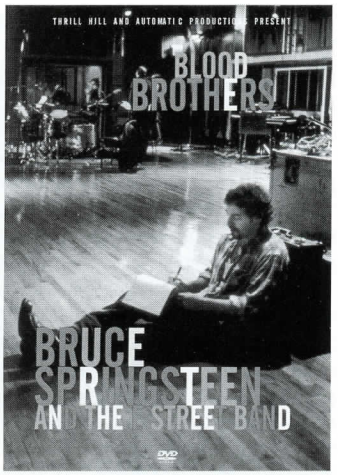
THEY'RE GONNA MAKE A TV MOVIE OUT OF ME

The Backstreets *Interview with Ernie Fritz*



By Robert S. Bader

The mere existence of the film *Blood Brothers* is remarkable. Throughout the '70s and '80s Bruce Springsteen made a habit of rejecting lucrative offers to appear on television. Just the fact that he allowed a filmmaker to bring a camera to a recording session, in January 1995, represented a quantum leap from the days when his recording sessions were shrouded in mystery. The presence of the camera guaranteed nothing; the footage could have easily just been added to an archive of unreleased material and soon forgotten.

But those E Street Band sessions became the most well documented of Springsteen's career when *Blood Brothers* aired on the Disney Channel on March 3, 1996. It would later be released as a videocassette, and now it's finally available in the DVD format. *Blood Brothers* is for Springsteen fans what *Let It Be* is to Beatles fans. But while *Let It Be* shows a band falling apart, *Blood Brothers* shows a band coming back together.

So how did Bruce Springsteen reach the point where he agreed to have his recording sessions filmed? And how did *Blood Brothers* manage not to get relegated to the vault? The answers turn out to be surprisingly simple. *Backstreets* caught up with filmmaker Ernie Fritz, who also keeps busy by teaching film at New York University, as he was finishing work on his latest project, a concert film from the recent Roger Waters tour. The interview took place at Chromavision, the same editing facility in New York where Springsteen first viewed *Blood Brothers*.

***Backstreets:* How did you get to be the filmmaker who was allowed into the studio with Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band?**

Ernie Fritz: Bruce's co-manager Barbara Carr and my wife have known each other for years, and when Jon Landau and Bruce decided to shoot some footage she suggested me. I think they'd seen some videos or documentaries that I'd done. Maybe the Jeff Buckley piece, but I'm not sure. But they didn't necessarily want me to make a movie. Jon Landau had decided that they should get some shots of the band reunion for possible news release to VH-1 or *Entertainment Tonight*. Basically shots of the band shaking hands, embracing, just to document the event.

How did that evolve into a full-length documentary?

EF: Jon expected that I would only last about an hour-and-a-half before Bruce would get fed up with being filmed. So I went there the first day with a very minimal crew and no lights. I was prepared to shoot for a few hours, get the footage they needed and nothing more. But they never said, "Okay, you're done, get out." So the end of the session comes, and Landau says, "Can you come back tomorrow?"

In the film, reference is made to the fact that Bruce decided to reunite the band on a Thursday and they were in the studio early the following week. You couldn't have had more than a couple of days notice.

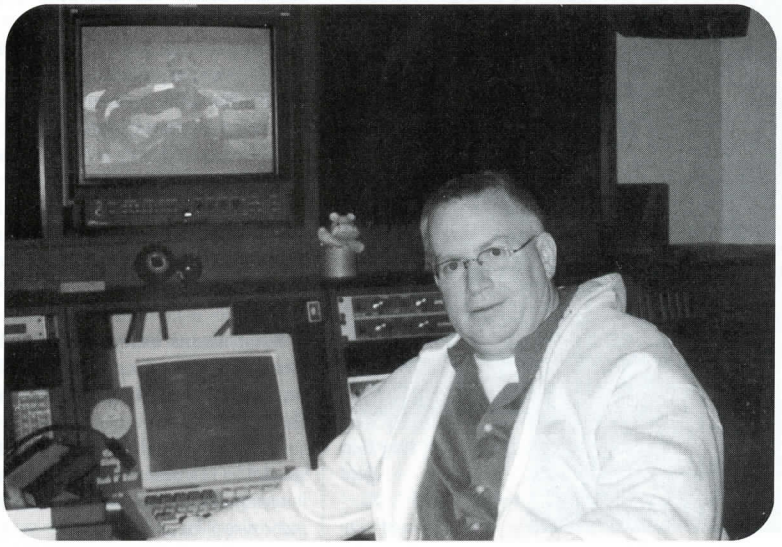
EF: I guess I got the call on Friday, after they knew all the guys could get there.

For the second day it would seem that you'd want to get some lights in there and turn it into more of a film shoot, but you need to balance that against the fact that the reason you've been invited back is that you were very unobtrusive that first day.

EF: I knew enough to keep it really small. I brought the smallest light kit possible, and I got there before the band came in to set it up. When I started on the first day, I had no idea how the band would be set up and what the lighting conditions would be or who would be where. So now I knew that Bruce would be in a booth that was a bit dark, and I put a small light in there.

For you as a filmmaker this seems like barely enough light to get a picture. But it had to be much more light than Bruce had ever seen at a recording session.

EF: Well, he didn't realize that the lights were going to be there at all. So the second night when they were about ready to do a take, Bruce—in the booth—moves to closer to the microphone, and I hear, "All right. Ready, boys? One, two" — he clicks off the light—"three, four..." and they start playing, and I have no shot. So he comes out of the booth to hear a playback and I go right back into the booth and turn the light back on. Well, he comes back in and does the "one-two-click off the light" thing again, and then again.



ROBERT S. BADER PHOTO

This would seem like the point where they say, "Well, thanks Ernie. We'll be in touch with you. There's the door."

EF: Well, I didn't want to go up to Bruce and say anything, so I asked Jon if he could get Bruce to leave the light on in the booth, and finally he was okay with it. I don't think it was a conscious thing on his part, he just wanted a more subdued vibe.

These sessions were atypical for reasons apart from the filming and the lights. Bruce and the band didn't usually enter the studio with a deadline and a need to finish a recording in a set amount of time. Add to that the fact that they had not played together in a long time, and the possibility for disaster is very large. Did you feel a sense of urgency or perhaps get the feeling that the camera being there added to any anxiety they might have been experiencing?

EF: I was very unobtrusive, but naturally they were aware that I was there. There was pressure, and they had to get it done. I could feel that Bruce was struggling at times. The first day everybody was pretty nervous. They

didn't know what to expect of each other. I guess it was a lot like seeing an old girlfriend after a lot of years had passed. I think Steve was the only one who was never nervous.

How did you fit in with all of these nervous people? The guy walking around the room with a film camera might not have been a popular person with all of the different emotions going on.

EF: Max seemed to be the only one who was overtly uncomfortable with the filming at first. Ultimately I had a good rapport with Max, but I don't think he trusted me in the beginning. Once he did, he was great. I think that part of the key was that I developed a good rapport with Chuck Plotkin from the get-go, and he sort of set the tone. Beyond that, I got along great with Nils. Danny was also really nice to me. Basically, they were all cooperative and friendly.

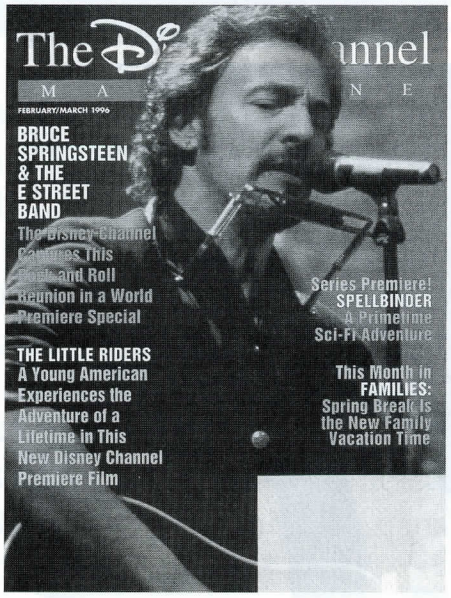
Did they ever ask you not to film part of a session?

EF: No. I filmed the whole thing. They never said "don't shoot." But I'm sure they had discussions outside of the studio when I wasn't around. If there was something they didn't want me to hear, they had plenty of opportunities for privacy. But really I don't think they thought about it much.

But of course the idea of this being a film had still not occurred to anyone.

EF: Except me. I had realized what I was getting. A few days into the sessions I said to myself, "I don't know what these guys are thinking, but I have a movie here." But nobody asked to see anything. They didn't even ask what I'd gotten. Jon just seemed happy that I was able to shoot and not get kicked out.

When you started to think in terms of this becoming a documentary, having just the single camera must have seemed like a handicap in your mind. But the minimal equipment is certainly the only reason they had you back after the first day. Since there's a shot of you in the film, there was definitely a second camera in there at some point.



EF: For the third day I brought in a second cameraman. As usual, I didn't know how many times they would do a song. Nobody did. To cover it with one camera was very difficult, so I felt I needed some help. But I only used him for that day. Nobody said anything, but that was the point where I sensed that they were getting a little uncomfortable. So I let him go early in the evening. He was only there for about five hours. There's a fine line when a situation becomes too much of a "film shoot" and not what it is supposed to be in reality. It was important that it remain a recording session and not become a film shoot.

The evolution of the song "Blood Brothers" is fascinating to watch in the film. Even more so when you take into account that it is happening over the course of a few days. In the normal course of events at a Springsteen recording session, that process might play out for months. Was there a particular day devoted to that song or did they move from song to song and return to it at various times?

EF: They might spend an hour on it and then Bruce would bail out. He knew when to bail. And he had a list of other songs he wanted to try, so he would move right into something else. But you could tell that he really wanted to get that one done.

In the film we hear a bit of an old outtake of "Frankie" being played in the studio. Did they listen to the old take of "This Hard Land?"

EF: As far as I know they never listened to "This Hard Land." They talked about re-recording "Frankie," but for whatever reason that I never caught, they never did. The only other thing I remember them listening to was Bruce's demo of "Secret Garden." That's what they're referring to in the film when they talk about "beating the demo."

Was there any attempt at re-recording "Murder Incorporated?"

EF: No. They never did it. I remember talking to Chuck about it. I guess they all felt that they couldn't improve on the version they had.

"Back in Your Arms" is shown in the film, but it didn't get released until the *Tracks* album a few years later. Did you get the feeling that Bruce was unhappy with it at the sessions?

EF: I can't tell you why Bruce wasn't digging it, because everybody else was. Landau loved it. Plotkin loved it. But I think something about the tempo was bothering him. Having watched Bruce work, I can say that the tempo of a song is a vital element for him. The whole character of a song can change drastically with just a slight variation of tempo. They did about four takes and moved on pretty quickly. For me, the take in the film is a great take and different from the one they released on *Tracks*. It's slightly slower and, I feel, more emotional.

What about other material from the sessions that was never released? There's at least one unreleased song, "Waiting on the End of the World."

EF: That's the only other one. And they really didn't spend a lot of time on it, just a few takes. I liked it a lot but really didn't have enough of it to cut together a comprehensive piece.

So over the course of the six days in the studio it seems like a lot of the time was spent on "Blood Brothers" and "Secret Garden." At least that's the impression left from viewing the film.

EF: Actually it's "Blood Brothers" and "This Hard Land." But "This Hard Land" doesn't get a lot of time in the film, because they didn't alter it very much in the various takes. "High Hopes" and "Without You" were basically quick things he decided to try at the end of the night. And "Without You" ended up being really great for the film.

There are some wonderfully positive moments in the film—like Clarence nailing the solo in "Secret Garden" and Bruce saying, "That's exactly right." Were there any equally negative moments that we don't see?

EF: I swear, absolutely none. And Clarence did nail it in one take. There were no fixes or overdubs there. He did it exactly as you see it in the film.

There's a moment of great drama in the scene where Bruce is hearing David Kahne's string arrangement of "Secret Garden" for the first time, and everyone in the room is nervously waiting for his reaction.

EF: Yeah. It was pretty tense. None of us knew which way it would go. And he wasn't letting on. He was just sitting there listening. So when he finally reacts and likes it, there is this great release of tension from the whole room.

I know you'd been a Bruce Springsteen fan for years before you had the opportunity to make the film. What were your thoughts as you stood in the studio filming that first day?

EF: Watching the finished film presents a pretty intimate bond with Bruce. When you're 15 feet from him and looking through the eyepiece of the camera, and you get the sense that he's looking at you through the lens, it's like, "Oh my God. I can't believe I'm here." At times, I felt lucky to have the camera in front of me just to hide behind it.

Obviously Bruce got comfortable with you being there. There's even a point in the film where he calls out your name in a playful way. Did you have much personal interaction with him?

EF: I was in a weird position. As a fan I wanted to get more involved, talk to him more, and I'm sure he would have. But, as a filmmaker I didn't, because I have found that if you get in and you start a dialogue with somebody while shooting a documentary, they no longer can ignore you. You lose that perspective of the fly on the wall because they feel they have to talk to you, and they no longer continue doing what they would have been doing had you not been there.

A lot of the time the band was playing live in the studio. Very few people have had the chance to hear that in person. What does it sound like on the studio floor?

EF: It doesn't sound that good, actually. The way they set up to record, the instruments are pretty well isolated. So if you're out there in the middle of the floor you basically hear a lot of Max's drums. You hear some of the other instruments, but the drums are really big and loud and pretty much drown everything else out. Actually,

my favorite place to hear things was Roy's booth. Hearing the piano parts going down clean was just incredible. Also hearing Steve lay down the mandolin parts on "This Hard Land" was really great.

What was Steve's level of involvement in the sessions?

EF: He basically just came in to do the mandolin part on "This Hard Land." And that's it. He was only there for maybe two days. I think he was busy with some other project.

But he does get in that great Spinal Tap reference in the "Murder Incorporated" video sequence at Tramps. How did you end up shooting that? Several weeks had gone by since the sessions. Was it known at that point that you were going to turn this footage into a film, or were you still just shooting without a definite purpose?

EF: I think I was still just shooting footage. It was unusual because Jonathan Demme was there with his crew to make the video. But he didn't know who I was or what I was doing. He only knew that I came along with Bruce's crew. I think that's how I got such great footage of Demme. I guess he felt that he couldn't stop me because he'd seen me hanging out with Bruce.

By the time of the Tramps show you'd obviously had time to look at all of your footage. You already had it in your mind that there was a film to be made from this material. How did it finally get to the point where you began to make it?

EF: I had all of the film developed and had been looking at it, wondering when they'd call and say "hand it over." But they didn't. So I called Jon Landau and asked if I could start cutting it together, and he said, "Yeah. Go ahead," and I just ran with it. So I put together about 20 minutes, and Bruce came up to the edit room to see it. I didn't know if he was going to hate it or what. Suddenly I was living that scene in the film with David Kahne's string arrangement. So he sees it and says, "Hey. This is pretty good. So that's what you were doing all that time." And that was it.

Did Bruce or anyone from his organization have any involvement from this point or have anything to say about the content?

EF: Nothing. Zero. They pretty much leave you alone and let you do what you've been hired to do. The next time Bruce saw it, the film ran about an hour and 45 minutes. Ultimately, there were only two very small things that Bruce wanted to change, so I changed one of them.

So the decision to include something like "Back in Your Arms" was made with no regard to the fact that it was not going to make it on the album?

EF: Yeah. That was left entirely up to me, and even though it wasn't going to be on the album, it still made good drama.

What did you remove from that hour-and-45-minute cut?

EF: I had a scene on the plane flying up to Portland, Maine, for the mastering session with Bob Ludwig. As we took off, we flew over Giants Stadium, and in the shot I could see the whole stadium through the window behind Bruce. Bruce looks down at it and says, "Yep. We've been there." It was a great moment, but it just didn't fit into the film. We had gone up to Portland for four days, and I had some scenes of the mastering sessions and of Bruce selecting the artwork for the album, but honestly, watching someone master an album is pretty boring. The only scene from Portland that stayed in the film is the one of Bruce on the street at night looking in the store window.

You had another opportunity to shoot something for Bruce on the *Ghost of Tom Joad* tour. How did that happen ?

EF: It was exactly the same situation as *Blood Brothers.* Bruce and Jon Landau had decided that they wanted me to come out and shoot some concerts. Bruce just wanted to document the show. It was a terrific show, and he just wanted to have some of that experience on film.

You shot the shows in San Diego, Fresno, Santa Barbara, San Jose and Freehold. Was there any serious consideration of releasing a film from the tour at the time?

EF: No. I put something together for him, and I think he liked it, but he just felt that it didn't warrant a release. I really didn't have enough material to make it a film, either.

As a filmmaker, what did you see in the acoustic show that was interesting to you?

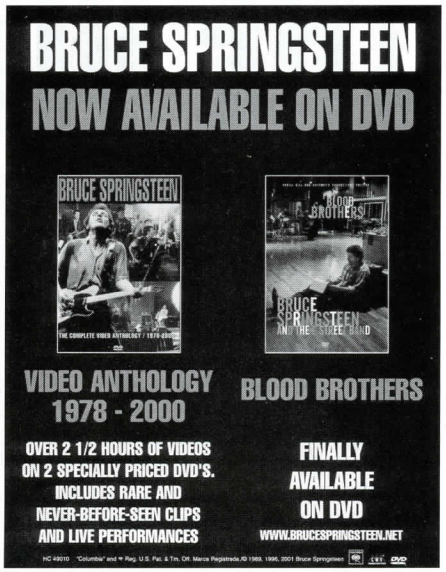
EF: I saw a different side of Bruce. He wasn't joking around. I think the somber subject matter of the music carried through to the daily operation of the whole tour. There weren't people backstage goofing around. It wasn't what you would call "a party tour." Besides that, I think there were only four crew people on that tour. Even so, I loved that tour and could see that show over and over again. It was really fantastic.

What would Ernie Fritz's film of the *Ghost of Tom Joad* tour have been like?

EF: I thought it might not be just a concert film. I guess I saw it as a film about the themes on the album with the music. Bruce and I talked about shooting some things apart from the shows. That's why we shot in California, where I went out and shot some scenes of migrant farm workers. I went deep into the Central Valley with a guy who ran a local food bank and shot at some of the quasi-labor camps where these people were living in outrageous conditions. "The Grapes of Wrath" is still very much real even today. I also went down to Tijuana and shot some things at the border. I got some footage of guys jumping over the fence just trying to make a break for it and the border patrol in their SUV's trying to round them up like cattle. But at the end of the day, there really wasn't enough material for a film.

You also shot some footage of Bruce working on the *Tracks* album. Did that evolve in the same way?

EF: Yeah. Same thing. They wanted to get some footage of the process. It was a pretty wild setup. He was running three mixing rooms at once. It was this very cool scene listening to all this fantastic material knowing that none of it had ever been released. It was like discovering a treasure chest. But there's no film there. Not every thing has to be a film. Some things can exist just as they are without them having to be released to the general public. It was just some footage of how that occurred. I didn't even



shoot it on film—it was done on digital video. Maybe someday Bruce will want to use it in a scene in some larger project, and maybe he won't, but that's his decision and I'm fine with that.

The DVD release of *Blood Brothers* is now upon us. What was your involvement with that?

EF: I was contacted, but I was pretty busy with the Roger Waters film that I shot last summer, so I couldn't really get involved. I had an idea that I wanted to do but just didn't have any time to do it: I wanted to record Bruce and Steve watching the film and do a commentary track, but they were busy with the tour, so it didn't work out. I think it could have been hysterical. I personally didn't want to do a director's commentary, because I thought it would be presumptuous on my part. The film is about them, not me..

What effect has *Blood Brothers* and the experience of working with Bruce had on your career as a filmmaker?

EF: Bruce's generosity in letting me work with him definitely allowed me to work with people like Billy Joel and Tony Bennett. It certainly created opportunities for me. Roger Waters saw *Blood Brothers* and decided that he wanted to hire me. He hadn't even seen anything else I'd done.

That's pretty high praise when you consider the extremely different scopes of those two projects.

EF: Absolutely. The Roger Waters film was shot with 11 cameras in high definition video at a concert in Portland, Oregon. It's got a lot of his great Pink Floyd songs. The show was kind of epic in scope. It's really quite a leap from the one-camera Springsteen shoot where I'm trying not to get in anyone's way.

To what do you attribute the fact that you were able to get *Blood Brothers* made in light of Bruce's reluctance to do that kind of project in the past? There had barely even been any still photographs of his recording sessions, and you pulled off a feature-length documentary.

EF: I think I just caught a break and tried not to be a jerk.

THE VIDEO ANTHOLOGY

WHEN BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN WAS TOURING FOR *Darkness on the Edge of Town*, video had yet to kill the radio star. In that summer of 1978, the birth of MTV was still nearly three years away—but it was lying out there like a killer in the sun.

The idea of promoting his music on television was one that Springsteen resisted, but by 1978 he began to reconsider. He talked to *Rolling Stone* about the potential of TV ads that year: "I realized shortly after *[Darkness]* came out that things had changed a lot since *Born to Run*... I realized that I worked for a year—a year of my life—on somethin' and I wasn't aggressively tryin' to get it out there to people." After filming a *Darkness* concert in Phoenix, Bruce told Philly DJ Ed Sciaky: "We're gonna do a TV commercial because there's places, like down South and in the Midwest, where we're not very well known. It's getting better, though. This time we're not super well known, but... we're gonna do us playing or something for 30 seconds. That's about as close to TV as I guess I'm gonna get."

Little did he know. In just a few years, MTV would emerge as a major force in the way music is marketed, enjoyed and even perceived. *Born in the U.S.A.* happened to coincide with that drastic shift; whether by design or by chance, Springsteen's image and his music were never more broadly appealing as in 1984-'85, just in time for the televised revolution.

Springsteen told *Rolling Stone's* Kurt Loder in late 1984: "Video is a powerful thing, and I wanted to be involved in it in some fashion. But it presents a variety of problems. I didn't want to infringe on my audience's imagination by presenting some concrete image that was a replica of an image in the song, and I didn't want to create *another* story, because I was already tellin' the story I wanted to tell."

Springsteen would never cease to grapple with those problems. Just as Loder would soon begin reporting for MTV News, the Video Age *changed* things. As Springsteen's image became inseparable from his music, it was clearly both a blessing and a curse.

Wrestling with the potential of video, with ways to reconcile the images in his songs with images on the screen, Springsteen may have slipped a time or two but managed to come out on top. He became relatively adept at working within the medium, simply by playing to his strengths: nearly two-thirds of the videos on the new *Video Anthology 1978-2000* collection rely heavily on live performance. And that, as the poet said, has made all the difference.

The original *Video Anthology 1978-88* was released 12 years ago on January 31, 1989. Now one of Springsteen's first released DVD titles (and subsequently issued as a new two-tape VHS set), the collection adds a millennial name change and an additional 15 videos from the '90s. Official promotional clips from the last decade are rounded out by a few broadcast television performances. Following that lead, the number of TV appearances Bruce made in the '90s alone could have provided material for yet another disc. Bruce's televised tributes to artists such as Bob Dylan, Frank Sinatra, and Johnny Cash are not collected here—in fact, there are no cover songs at all on the *Video Anthology.* Despite the somersaults, white horses, and exploding TVs, this remains a songwriter's showcase.

Here *Backstreets* offers a viewer's guide to the *Anthology* videos, old and new. While the dates listed in the *Anthology* liner notes seem to indicate the year of release of the video (or of the video's creation; occasionally neither), we've listed the date of the actual performance whenever possible. We've also attempted to fill in more information about the director of each piece, since, like few other aspects of his career, Springsteen's videos present his art filtered through the vision of others. Let's go to the videotape... and the DVD, too.

ROSALITA (COME OUT TONIGHT)

DATE: July 8, 1978

LOCATION: Veterans Memorial Coliseum, Phoenix, AZ

DIRECTOR: Arnold Levine. Levine was head of creative services, including the in-house video department at CBS in the 1970s.

PRE-PRODUCTION: Touring for the *Darkness* album, Springsteen was on television for the first time only the night before this video was shot. After the E Street Band's now-legendary radio broadcast gig at the Roxy in L.A., KABC-TV ran an interview along with footage of 'Prove It All Night' and 'Rosalita.' Of this television debut, Dave Marsh wrote in *Rolling Stone:* "...Even on this small screen, Springsteen is a visual natural, mugging like a seven-year-old and leaping like the rocker of someone's dreams; I know why so many film directors, seeing him for the first time, have virtually drooled in anticipation."

THE SHOOT: The very next night, Levine and a small film crew were in Phoenix to shoot what was planned as a television commercial, this being before the dawn of MTV. It was a sold-out Saturday night show at the 10,000-seat arena, and as Dave Marsh wrote in *Rolling Stone,* it was 109 degrees when the band got off the plane from L.A. Extra lights for the filming made the show even hotter than usual. Phoenix was a pocket of early support for Springsteen—Danny Federici once said of the town, "This is the first place I ever felt like a star"—and the audience showed it. Marsh wrote: "It's the sweetest tempered crowd I've ever seen, and at the same time, the most maniacal.... The cameramen are torn between filming Bruce, who is pouring it all out, and simply shooting the crowd, which is pushing him farther and farther." Look for the cameramen themselves caught in several shots (from the 6:53 mark on) when chaos ensues at the end of the clip.

THE BIG PICTURE: Though "Rosie" footage had aired previously (most notably in 1979's *Heroes of Rock 'n' Roll* on ABC and *The Old Grey Whistle Test* on BBC-TV), the clip didn't become an official video until 1984. Helping kick off the *Born in the U.S.A.* madness, the MTV premiere of the "Rosalita" video on May 16, 1984, was immediately followed by the announcement of the opening *Born in the U.S.A.* tour dates. With "Atlantic City" the only other video at the time, "Rosie" was the first to feature Bruce.

VIDEO HONORS: #71 on *Rolling Stone's* 1993 list of the Top 100 Music Videos.

THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR: Most of the show was shot on 16mm film, and at least four other songs were considered for promotional use: "Badlands," "Born to Run" and "Prove It All Night" were edited and ready for issue, and a rough cut was made of "The Promised Land."

The original "Rosalita" video, as released to MTV, included the band introductions with some great interplay between Clarence and Bruce. This segment, though it aired often on MTV, was edited out of the *Video Anthology* version on VHS, Laserdisc, and now DVD.

IN REVIEW: "...the twenty-something Bruce Springsteen is all goofy, giddy charm, leaping about the stage and making precious little effort to fend off the advances of female admirers emerging from the audience. Perhaps the most striking element of this performance clip, though, is the Boss' camaraderie with his E Street Band mates."

—Elysa Gardner, *Rolling Stone*

THE RIVER / THUNDER ROAD

DATE: September 23, 1979

LOCATION: Madison Square Garden, New York, NY

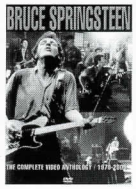
DIRECTORS: Danny Goldberg, Julian Schlossberg, and Anthony Potenza were responsible for organizing and producing the MUSE benefit shows in 1979; all three received directorial credit for the 1980 *No Nukes* film from which these performance clips were taken.

Potenza has worked as a film editor and director for television; Scholssberg is a film and Broadway producer. Goldberg has had a long and storied career in the music business, from vice president of Led Zeppelin's Swan Song label, to heading both Atlantic and Mercury. He was also President of Gold Mountain Entertainment, which managed Nirvana, Hole, Sonic Youth, and Patti Scialfa.

PRE-PRODUCTION: In the summer of 1979, activist Tom Campbell told Springsteen about the Musicians United for Safe Energy benefit concerts planned for that fall and asked him to join the bill. Bruce and the E Street Band were working on the follow-up to *Darkness,* but took time out from recording in September for two of the five concerts (9/22 and 9/23)—their first performances since the beginning of 1979 and for another year to follow.

THE SHOOT: While songs from their first show, 9/22/79, were included on the *No Nukes* album, "Thunder Road" and "The River" were filmed the following night. Marsh wrote in *Glory Days,* "When Levine filmed 'Rosalita' in Phoenix in 1978, his cameras were severely restricted in their movements, to prevent them coming between Springsteen and the audience. At the MUSE *No Nukes* shows, the

VIEWER'S GUIDE



By Chris Phillips

cameras were similarly constrained."

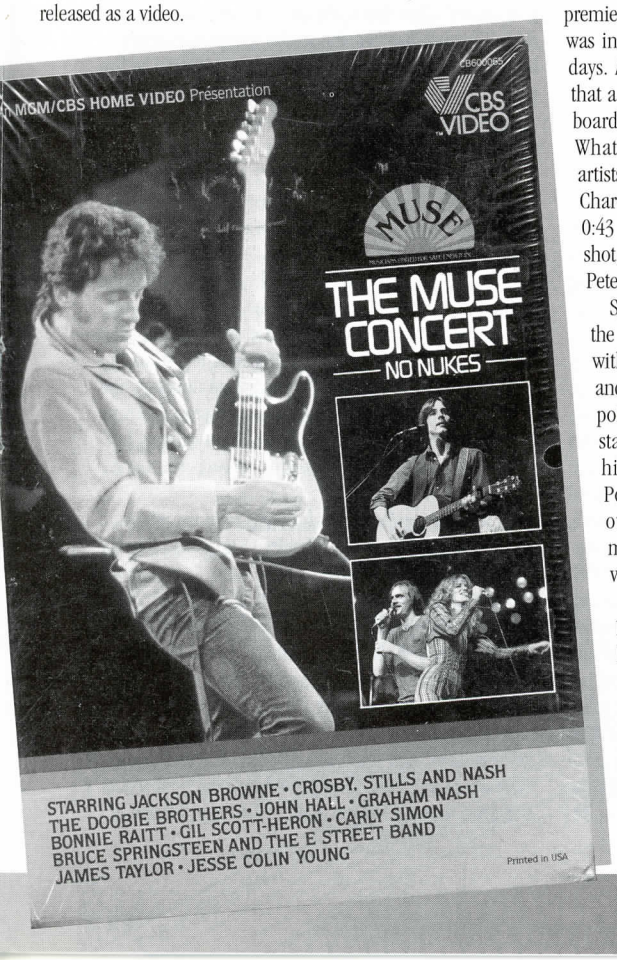
Springsteen premiered "The River" at these shows, so the video clip documents its second-ever live performance. Bruce told Charlie Rose in 1998: "If I had a new song I liked, I'd come out and play it. I played 'The River' before it was recorded… you just felt it had it had an urgency that you wanted to—you know, 'Tonight's the night… I got to sing that tonight.'"

Goldberg was quoted in Marc Eliot's *Down Thunder Road:* "Later on, when we were editing the film, after Bruce saw some of the footage, he took quite an interest in how it was being edited, and in particular how he was being edited. He was very concerned that there be a political message in the film, which was a happy revelation to me. It hadn't been clear, to me anyway, exactly how into the politics of the show he was, but as it turned out, he was extremely so. He didn't want this to be just a concert."

THE BIG PICTURE: "Thunder Road" and "The River" were originally part of the *No Nukes* film, released in the summer of 1980, which documented the concerts. The film was subsequently available on video (currently out of print), and clips were used on the *Old Grey Whistle Test,* before these two songs were compiled on the *Video Anthology* release in 1989.

Don't miss Springsteen referring to his sister and her husband as he introduces "The River"—they were an inspiration for the song. And when Bruce jumps the gun with his vocals at 2:51, it's a prime example of the E Street Band on their toes.

THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR: The E Street Band performed 11 songs at the 9/23 show; portions of "Quarter to Three" were included in *No Nukes* but the song was never released as a video.



ATLANTIC CITY

DATE: Autumn, 1982

LOCATION: Atlantic City, NJ

DIRECTOR: Arnold Levine. No longer with CBS by this time, Levine was working as a freelance video director.

PRE-PRODUCTION: Though "Atlantic City" and "Open All Night" were issued as singles in many other countries, the not-ready-for-radio *Nebraska* had no singles released in the U.S. Since MTV was in its infancy and in need of content, a video would be a good way to get airtime to promote this "difficult" LP. Levine proposed a video of Atlantic City itself. State voters approved gambling in 1976, and New Jersey's first legal casino opened on the Atlantic City boardwalk in 1978, just four years prior to the footage shot by Levine.

THE SHOOT: According to Marsh's *Glory Days,* Levine was told Bruce wouldn't be in the video because he was headed to California to mix. Christopher Sandford wrote in *Point Blank,* "Springsteen had no objection to a video—he just didn't want to be in it." Bruce told Chet Flippo, "the only direction I gave was to say that it should be kind of gritty-looking and it should have no images that matched up to images in the song."

Levine shot the black and white video on a single day with a hand-held camera, much of it from a moving car. He told *Rolling Stone,* "The whole idea was showing the disparity between the boardwalk and a block away from the boardwalk, after all those promises about how they were going to rebuild Atlantic City."

THE BIG PICTURE: MTV began broadcasting on March 5, 1981. The first authorized Springsteen video had its world premiere on the network on December 22, 1982, and was in heavy rotation—a "hit"—through the holidays. At the time, MTV VJs suggested (erroneously) that a sharp eye could catch Bruce walking down the boardwalk, or spot his hand on the steering wheel. What you *can* see are the names of some of the artists playing the casinos: at Harrah's, Eddie Rabbit, Charo, John Davidson, Jack Jones; a freeze-frame at 0:43 suggests more specifically when the video was shot, with November dates advertised for Paul Anka, Peter Allen, and Dolly Parton.

Speaking of Parton, *Backstreets* #5 proclaimed the absence of Bruce in the video "a crime... on par with filming a commercial for Dolly Parton bras and failing to show Dolly." But from this vantage point the video has aged better than most and stands as one of Springsteen's most powerful. In his *Rolling Stone* review of *Nebraska,* Steve Pond wrote, "The style is steadfastly, defiantly out-of-date, the singing flat and honest, the music stark, deliberate and unadorned"; the video suits the *Nebraska* album to a T.

VIDEO HONORS: #37 on *Rolling Stone*'s 1993 list of the Top 100 Music Videos, Bruce's highest-ranked of the three that placed.

POST-PRODUCTION: Thomas Peele, who covers the city for *The Press of Atlantic City,* wrote in *Backstreets* #59, "In some physical respects, Atlantic City has changed greatly since director Arnold Levine ushered Springsteen into the MTV age with a grainy, black and white video that remains the best short film ever made about this town. There are more hotels, a massive convention center, blocks of new housing.… The mob was beaten back to Camden and Philadelphia, but New Jersey's strident laws also restrained the casinos' growth, in turn slowing the resort's recovery."

DANCING IN THE DARK

DATE: June 28 and 29, 1984

LOCATION: Civic Centre, St. Paul, MN

DIRECTOR: Brian DePalma, a feature film director who had directed such thrillers as "Blow Out," "Dressed to Kill," "Body Double," and "Scarface."

PRE-PRODUCTION: The "Dancing in the Dark" single was released on May 9, but without an accompanying video—"Rosalita" premiered a week later in order to get something on MTV. "Dancing in the Dark" would be Springsteen's first appearance in a rock video of his own, originally to be directed by Jeff Stein and scheduled to hit MTV at the beginning of the tour. But the tour opener would serve as the basis of the video instead, as Stein was replaced by DePalma and the video was delayed. "Although the stylistic disparity couldn't have been more complete—DePalma specialized in the overkill Springsteen disdained—it was outweighed by the virtues of working with a talented professional who could move quickly," Marsh wrote in *Glory Days.* In preparation for the shoot, DePalma worked with Bruce and the band as they were rehearsing for the tour in Lititz, PA. At the time of the shoot, the single had already been in the Top 40 for a month.

THE SHOOT, PART ONE (JUNE 28): Much of the video was shot at the arena on the day before the actual show, "working with three cameras through eleven setups and several hours of repetitious shooting and posing," according to Marsh. DePalma and Jon Landau created a basic storyline, and DePalma cast aspiring actress Courtney Cox as the girl who would be pulled onstage to dance. Passes were given out to concertgoers at a recent Rush show to form a crowd of roughly 200 for the shoot. Smoke machines from this day can be spotted in the video (0:43)—but less for effect than to hide empty seats.

After a 90-minute wait, Springsteen came out to loosen up and entertain the crowd a bit—some Q&A, some jokes, some juggling— before the cameras rolled. The July 12, 1984, *City Pages* described the scene: "DePalma, wearing a khaki-colored safari outfit, says it's time to start. At this point only Springsteen, the band, and a few of DePalma's crew know which song is being filmed—where Springsteen goes, secrecy follows. Tape leader hisses through the P.A., and in moments everyone is on their feet swaying to the recognizable synthesizer intro for 'Dancing in the Dark.' Springsteen maintains eye contact with DePalma as they match each other's moves back and forth across the stage, the bearded director punching the air in rhythm to Max Weinberg's drumming."

City Pages noted DePalma's discussion of the careful planning, choreography, and the "controlled situation" this shoot allows; "Springsteen, though, constantly changes his dance steps and never quite follows the plan, much to DePalma's annoyance." Between takes, the paper continued, "The band goofs around, lapsing into 'Heat Wave,' a full cover of 'Tequila,' even a bit of Chopin. Roy Bittan and Dan Federici play with the intro to 'Dancing,' slowing it down so it sounds more like a ballad than a Top 40 Hit.

MICHAEL J. FOX AND HIS *FAMILY TIES* FLAME COURTENEY COX HAVE A BIG ANNOUNCEMENT TO MAKE—*THEY'RE NOT DATING*

FROM *PEOPLE* MAGAZINE

Bruce sings softly at first, 'I get up in the evening/And I ain't got nothing to say.' He walks up the ramp at the back of the stage, his voice growing and filling the cavernous Civic Center. For minutes everyone is suspended—the intensity of the rendition is almost scary."

The shoot wrapped around 7 p.m. Some of the crowd left early, but Bruce and the band played "Detroit Medley" to thank those who stuck around.

THE SHOOT, PART TWO (JUNE 29): The second half of the "Dancing" shoot is live before a paying crowd on opening night. Springsteen performs the same song twice in one show, something he's only done a handful of times in his career. It's a rocky start to the tour, in no small part due to the intrusive cameras—which seem to get under the skin of Bruce and critics alike. Jon Bream reviewed the show in the *Minneapolis Star and Tribune:* "[F]ilm director Brian DePalma was working on videos of two songs, which inhibited the physicality and flow of the show.... the presence of video cameramen onstage disrupted the concert more than was necessary. Filming snafus prolonged the intermission to an annoying 50 minutes; in addition, the two cameramen roving onstage for more than the two songs they were filming seemed an affront to both Springsteen and his fans. He showed humor and elan when explaining why he had to perform 'Dancing in the Dark' twice... and no one seemed to mind. But DePalma's camera crew outwore its welcome by coming out to film the encore. It was rude to all the hardcore fans who stood in line so long for tickets to this opening show and it visibly irritated Springsteen...."

THE BIG PICTURE: "Dancing in the Dark" premiered on MTV nearly a month into the tour, on July 25, but was integral in solidifying Bruce's new image. Not only was Springsteen buffed up (in every respect) just in time for the video age, but the video served as a template for what fans could expect—or in many cases dream fervently about—at the show, with a girl picked from the crowd to dance on the song for every night of the tour. But its slickness—partly due to the blatant lip-sync in a concert setting—didn't sit well with many, including Bruce. He told DJ Roger Scott, "Basically, the thing I didn't like about that [video] was it was lip-synced. Which is not what I want to do, because I think the best thing our band does is address the moment. And we go for authentic emotion and that gets all knocked out of whack when you're singing to something you recorded a long time ago. It was an experiment."

An experiment that has brought some chuckles over the years. Curt Fluhr, bassist for the Castiles, later told *Rolling Stone:* "I saw that 'Dancing in the Dark' video, and I started laughing. When he did that dance in high school, he used to call it the boogaloo." Adam Sandler parodied the boogaloo, and Courtney Cox's big break in general, when Cox hosted *Saturday Night Live* years later—also using a clip of Clarence from the video itself (1:41), repeated to hilarious effect.

Robert Hilburn wrote: "In the view of many, this video was able to do something that had never been done before: make Springsteen look artificial, contrived and uncomfortable in a concert setting. It had all the warmth and sincerity of a deodorant commercial—yet it proved immensely popular with MTV viewers."

BRUCE SAYS: "Brian was great, because I had no time—we were getting ready for our first show—and he came in on real short notice and really took the burden off my shoulders. We did that video in about three or four hours. Lip-syncing is one of those things—it's easy to do, but you wonder about the *worth* of doing it. That video was great, though, because I noticed that most of the people that would come up and mention it to me were people who hadn't heard my other stuff. Very often, they were real little kids. I was on the beach and this kid came up to me—I think his name was Mike, he was like seven or eight—and he says, 'I saw you on MTV.' And then he says, 'I got your moves down.' So I say, 'Well, let me check 'em out.' And he starts doin', like 'Dancing in the Dark.' And he was *pretty good,* you know?" —1984, *Rolling Stone*

VIDEO HONORS: Nominated for Best Overall Performance in a Video and won Best Stage Performance in a Video, 1985 MTV Video Music Awards. Steve Van Zandt accepted for Bruce.

THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR: Jeff Stein (The Who's *The Kids Are Alright;* Tom Petty's "Don't Come Around Here No More") started filming, including a day at Astoria Studios in Queens, before being replaced by DePalma. Extant Stein footage from a basement shoot shows a leather-jacketed Bruce dancing around a boombox.

As for the DePalma version, *Backstreets* originally reported: "The video was shot several different ways, but Bruce decided to go with the actress rather than with a real fan. The original script called for her to come into the show late, buy a t-shirt and run down to the front of the stage."

IN REVIEW: "On record, the song is about blind faith and struggle; here, as the comic Bob Goldthwaite put it, Springsteen looks like a member of Up with People.... Moving across the stage in seemingly choreographed, marks-on-the-board jerks, he grins like a supper club singer doing 'Gloomy Sunday' while communicating boundless love for the crowd." —Greil Marcus

BORN IN THE U.S.A.

DATE: October - November, 1984

LOCATION: Sports Arena, Los Angeles, CA / Various New Jersey locations

DIRECTOR: John Sayles. One of the most respected independent U.S. filmmakers for two decades running, Sayles was also the first director authorized to use Springsteen's music in a film. His *Baby It's You* from 1983 used Bruce's music extensively on the soundtrack ("Adam Raised a Cain," "She's the One," "It's Hard to Be a Saint in the City," "E Street Shuffle"). In addition to working with Bruce several times since, Sayles continued raising funds independently to create an extremely diverse, intelligent and powerful body of work, including *Eight Men Out, Matewan, City of Hope, Lone Star, Men With Guns,* and *Limbo.*

PRE-PRODUCTION: Back in 1983, Sayles told *Backstreets:* "Bruce had never given his songs to any filmmaker before. We sent him the *[Baby It's You]* script and he really liked it. He sent his manager to see it and then Bruce said we could have them. We didn't even have to pay a whole bunch of money for them—he gave the songs away but Columbia wanted some bucks. I was really honored."

But Sayles and Springsteen didn't actually meet until 1984. Dave Marsh describes the meeting in *Glory Days:* "The night after they mastered *Born in the U.S.A.* Chuck Plotkin, Springsteen, and several other friends had dinner at the Hoboken home of Sayles and his producer, Maggie Renzi.... John and Bruce proved to be as personally compatible as the similarity of their work suggested they would be."

The next time they spoke, Springsteen was asking Sayles to direct his next promo clip. Though a "Cover Me" video had reportedly been in the works with DePalma at the helm, that second single hit the charts without a video. But Bruce wanted to do one for the third single and Sayles was hired to shoot performance footage of "Born in the U.S.A." in L.A.

THE SHOOT: The Los Angeles stand comprised seven concerts from October 25 to November 4, 1984. Not only did the band wear the same clothes every night for the cameras, Bruce's stubble was hand-trimmed each day. The restricted camera access harkens back to the early *Anthology* videos; Springsteen is even obscured at several points, possibly for effect, but surely a reaction to the "Dancing in the Dark" experience as well. Sayles also filmed non-performance footage of laborers, U.S. servicemen, and Americans of all stripes at various locations around New Jersey. For the closing shot, the *Born in the U.S.A.* album cover is brought to life, as the camera pans up from the "butt-shot" to find a Springsteen significantly scruffier than in the previous video.

THE BIG PICTURE: The single itself was released on the day after the L.A. stand, so the video was again lagging behind. That wasn't the only lack of sync—the jarring difference between the studio audio track and the live performance footage is immediately striking. The live version of the song is slower than the studio take, and Springsteen made no compensation, phrasing-wise or otherwise in the way he performed it.

"Sayles was widely criticized for that clip's lack of lip-syncing," Marsh notes in *Glory Days,* "but the decision was entirely due to Bruce's dissatisfaction with the lip-syncing in 'Dancing in the Dark.'... The problem was that the video had to be out before the single's run up the charts was finished. There wasn't time to do the painstaking mixing necessary to use the live soundtrack, and after 'Dancing in the Dark' Bruce absolutely refused to lip-sync." The early days of MTV clearly had directors and artists working out kinks and, by trial and error, learning lessons; it's remarkable how many of Springsteen's later videos either incorporate live vocals or live performances in full.

As for non-performance footage, note the photo of Springsteen's first band, the Castiles (1:40); as well as the Stone Pony exterior (4:22), showing John Eddie coming on November 2 and Cats [on a Smooth Surface] on November 3. The extended shot of the white memorial markers (3:41) is clearly a resonant image for Springsteen—consider his introduction to "Born in the U.S.A." at his 1996 Freehold concert: "You always remember certain features about your town.... We'd drive back in towards town, and there was always those crosses right there where 537 splits to go out towards the high school. And when you're a kid you don't really know; I mean, it

just looked beautiful to me, those beautiful white crosses. And I remember [asking], 'Mama, what's that?' And she said, 'Well, those are the men from our town who died in the war.' So—this is for my Aunt Edie." Her husband, Frank Bruco, was killed in World War II.

VIDEO HONORS: In late 1986, "Born in the U.S.A." ranked at #1 on MTV's Top 100 Videos of All Time.

THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR: The second video DePalma was reportedly shooting back on June 29 was "Born in the U.S.A." And there could have been a promotional video of a different kind, had Springsteen accepted Lee Iacocca's offer (reportedly 12 million dollars) to license the song for a Chrysler ad.

I'M ON FIRE

DATE: February, 1985
LOCATION: Los Angeles, CA
DIRECTOR: Sayles, who donated his $10,000 directorial fee for this one to a fund aiding Sandinistas in Nicaragua.

PRE-PRODUCTION: In February 1985, Springsteen had roughly a month "off" between U.S. and Pacific Rim legs of the *Born in the U.S.A.* tour. Following shows in Syracuse on January 26 and 27, Bruce flew to Los Angeles. He remained in L.A. for the next month or so, taking part in the "We Are the World" sessions, attending the Grammys with new love interest Julianne Phillips, and filming his second video with Sayles.

THE SHOOT: The fourth single was originally planned to have a live video, and Sayles filmed "I'm on Fire" (as well as "Bobby Jean," planned at the time as the fifth single) at the Syracuse concerts. But according to Marsh, "Springsteen was determined to have a first-rate video to go with ["I'm on Fire"], something that worked at an angle to what the song said, not just a performance piece." Springsteen and Sayles came up with the story, which was shot and edited quickly and gave Bruce his first speaking lines: "Oh, hi… it's goin' okay."

THE BIG PICTURE: The first storyline to be attached to a Springsteen video, of a working-class guy and a high-class gal, echoes Sayles' *Baby It's You.* Again, the video didn't reach the screen until well into the life of the "I'm on Fire" single, which had been released on February 4. Intrigue surrounding Springsteen's relationship with Julianne Phillips was heightened by the video's unbilled mystery woman. After some serious time in the *Backstreets* Sound Labs, we're convinced that at least the voice belongs to Julianne. As for the character in the video, all we know is that she's got a nice Thunderbird, a mansion on the hill, and a big rock on her finger—a lingering shot at 0:52 lets the viewer know for sure that she's married. Legend has it that her T-bird is the same one driven by Suzanne Somers in *American Graffiti.* Apologists for Springsteen's "working class hero" image claim he himself never cultivated the blue-collar tag, but the Sayles videos—with Bruce playing a mechanic in his first acting role and a construction worker in the follow-up—tell a different story. A story continued from Springsteen's very first video appearance, actually: he had appeared briefly as a car wash attendant in Clarence Clemons' "Woman's Got the Power."

IN REVIEW: As Springsteen's acting debut, Clarence's video notwithstanding, "I'm on Fire" won raves. In his 1989 review of the original *Video Anthology* Jim Farber wrote: "…watching this collection, one can't help recognizing that Springsteen's honesty overcomes the medium's contrivance. Springsteen can communicate his message as deeply with his face and body as with his voice. In the clip for 'I'm on Fire,' Springsteen's eyes relate the inner life of the character he is singing about, mixing equal parts lust and self-doubt."

VIDEO HONORS: Won Best Male Video at the 1985 MTV Video Music Awards.

THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR: Springsteen is shown singing by himself in the video, but the performance footage from Syracuse was never used.

GLORY DAYS

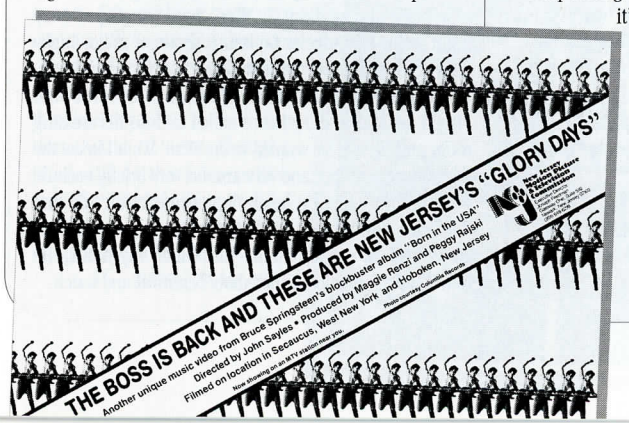
DATE: Late May, 1985
LOCATION: Various NJ, see below.
DIRECTOR: John Sayles

PRE-PRODUCTION: Springsteen and Phillips were married on May 13, and his new bride would be part of this video shoot less than two weeks later. The filming needed to happen quickly, as the E Street Band's European tour would start on June 1.

THE SHOOT: Bruce and Sayles again came up with the storyline together. In the last week of May, "Glory Days" was filmed primarily on three dates in three different Jersey locations. West New York, May 24, was used for the construction site and baseball scenes. On May 27, Sayles shot at a friend's house in Secaucus, where Bruce watched Dwight Gooden pitch on TV ("Doc" Gooden can be seen striking out two Cincinnati Reds, Eddie Milner and Nick Esasky, at Shea Stadium). Maxwell's, a Hoboken rock club, was the setting of the performance footage on May 28. The hubbub in Hoboken— police barricades, media, and crowds gathered outside—would prompt Max Weinberg to remark, "Gee, it's getting to be like *A Hard Day's Night* around here."

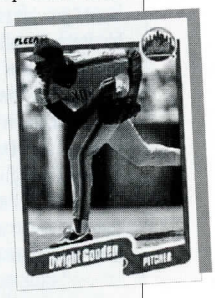
Julia Panebianco wrote about the Maxwell's shoot for *Record:* "'Glory Days' blasts from the back room—again and again it blasts from the back room (there's nothing like the set of a rock video to make even the best songs uncomfortably familiar) as the group lip-syncs the chorus, playfully bashing away at their instruments. It's supposed to be late at night in a neighborhood bar, and the crew puffs powder into the air and onto the extras to give the scene that certain *je ne sais quoi* of cigarette smoke. Bottles and half-filled glasses litter the tables, and Springsteen searches the piano top for something to drink. 'This is the fake beer! Where's the *real* beer?' he wheezes good-naturedly.

"Responding to Sayles' sarcastic command to 'Pretend it's hot in here,' the crowd… claps along to the song while the band mugs for the cameras. Before every take, the Boss sings aloud to stretch his vocal chords ("Bayybee") and does a little go-go dance to warm up. Clarence Clemons bangs a cow bell, and once again the E Streeters barrel into "Glory Days," with no perceptible loss of energy or enthusiasm. 'More heat! More smoke! More takes!' jokes Springsteen.



"During lunch, an anxious policeman hands over his hat as a gift and dumps a Budweiser all over Springsteen's lap. The star proceeds to film the rest of the video in damp duds…."

THE BIG PICTURE: While "Glory Days" was released as the fifth single on May 22, the video would premiere after the start of the European leg. A much larger cast was employed for the last of Sayles' *Born in the U.S.A.* trilogy, including Phillips's billed cameo (her most famous role for some time); Barbara Carr's nephews Jason Fisher and James "Lucky" Dunning; and the entire E Street Band. Steve Van Zandt even returned to the fold, though not for the first time (he had already guested on the *Born in the U.S.A.* tour after his departure from the band). In the crowd at Maxwell's are friends and family of the band, Sayles regular Joe Morton (*Brother From Another Planet,* et al.), and, appearing in a cameo playing pool (at 1:41 and 1:53), Dave Marsh.



Springsteen's second "acting" gig shows off his baseball skills and gives him more lines, like the memorable, "Uh-oh, we're late." Though he's clearly playing a character, with Phillips playing the wife of this baseball fanatic and father of two, this could be a vision of Springsteen's future in an alternate universe. Marsh observed in *Glory Days,* "The family scenes establish a Springsteen persona that steps outside rock and roll's myth of eternal youth. It's hard to think of another music video in which a star functions comfortably—and as an adult—in the interior of a nuclear family. The identity of most rock stars would explode in any version of this situation. But it enriched Springsteen's image and allowed the video to burrow much closer to the heart of the song…."

VIDEO HONORS: Nominated for Best Male Video and Best Overall Performance in a Video, 1986 MTV Video Music Awards.

IN REVIEW: "Rock vids by big name directors—especially John Sayles' 'Glory Days,' wherein a radiant Boss flashes like a neon ad for America itself—completed Springsteen's transformation from a scrounging Seventies cult hero into a full-blown Eighties working-class matinee idol." —1985 Year-end review, *Rolling Stone*

MY HOMETOWN

DATE: September 27 - October 2, 1985
LOCATION: L.A. Coliseum, Los Angeles, CA
DIRECTOR: Arthur Rosato. Rosato was hired as video director for the *Born in the U.S.A.* tour by tour director George Travis. Previously, Rosato had worked extensively with Bob Dylan—from doing sound for his 1978 film *Renaldo and Clara,* to playing drums on the *Shot of Love* tour. Rosato attended his first Springsteen concert with Dylan in 1980. In recent years, Rosato has done work with Neil Young and his Vapor label, including cinematography for 1997's *Year of the Horse.*

PRE-PRODUCTION: Rosato spent much of 1985 filling the Mitsubishi Diamond Vision screens for the stadium leg. "Rosato's low-key, straightforward direction would be a key to effectively translating the visual side of Springsteen's shows to audiences sometimes sitting more than a hundred yards away. As those fans learned, the cameras loved Bruce outside, too," Marsh wrote in *Glory Days.* Rosato's responsibilities also extended to editing and cataloging the footage he shot for possible future use. According to Christopher Sandford, Springsteen and Rosato "fraternized" on the road: "Rosato, who shot

every night on video, would then sit with Springsteen in the cutting room." "I'm Goin' Down" was picked as the sixth single from *Born in the U.S.A.* and released on September 14 without a video. Two weeks later, the 15-month tour would come to a close.

THE SHOOT: The final stand of the tour in Los Angeles would provide video footage for the seventh and final single from the album. But this was less of a "shoot" than previous videos so far, as Rosato's cameras were rolling on a nightly basis. That fall, Rosato continued working with footage in the Cherry Hill studio of NFL Films. He told Anthony DeCurtis, "My job now that the tour's over, is to go through and catalog everything. I've been editing stuff, just so that it makes sense to them, and I show it to them as we go along. As for the future, they could release something tomorrow if they decided."

Which is essentially what happened: as the holidays approached and "I'm Goin' Down" slid down the charts, "My Hometown" was selected as the follow-up and needed a video fast. Marsh wrote, "Bruce wasn't interested in jumping right back into harness to make a conceptual video. He'd had 'fun' working with John Sayles but said his interest then was primarily that 'it was a new thing. It was just something different and I wanted to learn a little bit about it.'" From Rosato's footage, a clip came together quickly.

THE BIG PICTURE: Thanks to Rosato's editing efforts along the way, "My Hometown" became the first *Born in the U.S.A.* video to be released "on time"—it even beat the single by two days, with its MTV premiere on November 19. It was also the first and only straightforward, live video from the album—an unfortunate happenstance, in a way, as the song was clearly one of the more static in performance and would have lent itself well to a more conceptual or documentary style. But it did set the stage for the effective use of live performance in Springsteen videos in the years to come.

THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR: Springsteen's most impassioned raps often came before "My Hometown," but this video cuts to the chase. Whether acknowledging the U.S.A.'s burden of shame or encouraging the crowd to support local food banks, Springsteen's intros served to make the song feel *bigger.* As he told one audience: "I wrote this song, which... I thought was about the town I grew up in, but I guess in the end it's a song about coming to grips with the responsibilities of being an American." The lack of prologue leaves this performance feeling a little flatter than it should.

IN REVIEW: "What is most amazing is that Springsteen's charisma, even at its most spectacular, seldom overwhelms the tales of the everyday men and women who people his songs. There are exceptions: In 'My Hometown,' for example, his sexual allure overpowers the lyrics of the song." —Jim Farber, 1989 review of the *Video Anthology*

WAR

DATE: September 27 - October 2, 1985

LOCATION: L.A. Coliseum, Los Angeles, CA

DIRECTOR: Arthur Rosato. Having filmed concerts in Australia and Europe as well as the U.S., Rosato spent a year after the tour looking at over 500 hours of Springsteen video on a daily basis. He told the *Courier-Post:* "I have to honestly say I never get tired of it. Each song in its own way is special. I have the luxury of looking at all the different performances with all the different emotions..... Let's just say it's not like watching Barry Manilow over and over again."

PRE-PRODUCTION: A year before debuting "War" on tour, Springsteen introduced "Reason to Believe" by saying, "Here's a song about blind faith. That is always a dangerous thing, whether it's in your girlfriend... or if it's in your government." At the end of the tour, he'd work up a more visceral performance to drive home that sentiment. The E Street Band's version of "War," a 1970 hit for Edwin Starr, was a fairly spontaneous addition to the show. "[W]hen we started to do 'War,'" Bruce told *Rolling Stone,* "which we only did the last four nights of the whole tour, I was looking for some way to reshape that part if the show to make it as explicit as I could, without sloganeering." As Marsh tells it in *Glory Days,* the idea came when Bruce and Landau were out driving shortly before the stand began, and both had the song in mind: "'It was funny,' Bruce said, 'because it was a song that Jon suggested maybe a year before. And we just couldn't get it down—it seemed too hard to play or we didn't have the patience at the time. Or at the moment it didn't make enough sense. And then we just tried 'War' one afternoon and we got it just fine. So I taped the words to my arm and we did it.'" "War" would be played every night at the Los Angeles Coliseum shows, a major highlight of the stand and of the stadium tour in general.

THE SHOOT: Max Weinberg recalled to *Billboard,* "Right before the show Bruce called us into his dressing room and he said he wanted to do 'War.' We all knew the tune, so we went out and rehearsed it very briefly because we had never played it before in concert." Max said that the band didn't know about the spoken intro. "[Bruce] came back to me and said, 'Just watch my hand.' He went through this long, incredibly beautiful and touch-

DVD ABCs

By Shawn Poole

A KINDERGARTEN TEACHER GIVES *VIDEO ANTHOLOGY* A POOR GRADE IN SPELLING

Don't get me wrong: I love the new *Anthology* DVD as much as a lot of Springsteen fans do. But I'm not just a fan—I'm also a kindergarten teacher. Rarely do these dual identities intersect (although I often use "Without You" to help teach my students the days of the week, and "Born to Add" by *Sesame Street's* Bruce Stringbean is sometimes heard blasting from my classroom). Nevertheless, there is one aspect of *Anthology* that I must regretfully grade very poorly, both as a fan and as a teacher: the atrocious amount of misspelling, errors, and omissions on this DVD and its packaging. I don't know who is responsible for these mistakes, but they clearly need to spend a while in the "time-out" chair thinking about what they did. I spotted eleven, count 'em, eleven separate errors. All but two were in the closing credits, where:

1. Clarence Clemons' name is misspelled. (Clarence's name was also misspelled in the closing credits of the original VHS edition of *Anthology,* so perhaps this is somebody's idea of an in-joke. I doubt the Big Man is laughing.)

2. Garry Tallent's name is misspelled. (It's also misspelled in the DVD booklet, but I won't mark off for it twice. Garry's probably not laughing, either.)

3. Carol Dennis' name is misspelled (both in the credits and, like Garry Tallent, in the booklet. Hasn't the 1992-'93 band gotten enough disrespect already?)

4. Meiert Avis' name is misspelled—seven times—but I'll still count it as one error, too.

5. "Tougher Than the Rest," recorded live during the *Tunnel of Love* Express Tour, is listed in both the credits and the booklet as being performed and/or released as a video in 1987; the Express Tour didn't even start until late February of 1988.

6. "Human Touch" credits are entirely omitted. No song/video title, no director, no nothin'. (Of course, if "Human Touch" had been included, Meiert Avis's name probably would've been misspelled an eighth time.)

7. "57 Channel (and Nothin' On)" and **8.** "Street of Philadelphia" are both listed as song titles. Someone needs to review their singular and plural noun forms.

9. Jonathan Demme's name is misspelled in the credit for "If I Should Fall Behind" (after being correctly spelled twice previously—the kind of mistake that you actually have to work to make).

As for the two other errors found outside the closing credits, one appears in the DVD's booklet, where the "Spare Parts" video is listed as being first released in 1998, rather than 1988. Finally, an additional, highly ironic spelling error can be found in the DVD's onscreen song menu, where "Murder Incorporated" is misspelled as "Murder Incoporated." Perhaps this was a subtle way of getting back at all those "American Skin" protesters. I hereby invite any and all Springsteen/Sony staffers responsible for these oversights to stop by my kindergarten class any time for remedial tutoring, free of charge—provided they can get Bruce to bring his guitar in for Show-and-Tell first.

Shawn Poole is a longtime Backstreets *SuperSub. He has taught kindergarten in the Philadelphia public schools for the past five years.*

ing monologue and he started to raise his hand. When he brought his hand down, everybody in the E Street Band hit that downbeat perfectly. It was awesome."

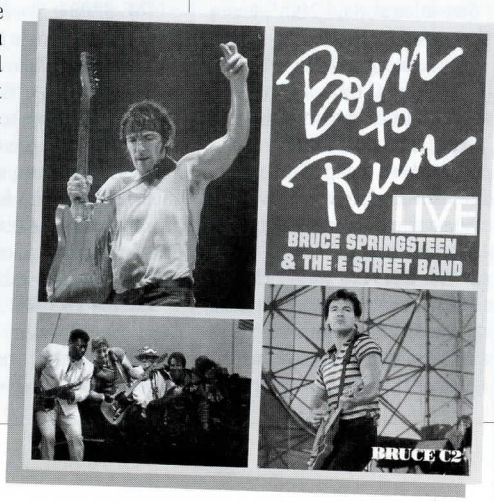
The live recording was considered as the B-side for "My Hometown," but it was saved for later when Landau gave Springsteen a cassette of four live songs, including "War," in 1985. As Bruce related in his *Live/1975-85* notes, that tape was the genesis of the live box set from which "War" would become the first single. The audio was taken from the September 30 show, but video footage from other nights may have been used.

THE BIG PICTURE: The "War" video was released in late fall of 1986 and seems to pick up right where Bruce and the band left off a year previous, in the same clothes as "My Hometown." But the similarities end there. Rosato told the *Courier-Post:* "It's not an entertainment piece. It says something. You can be pretty graphic without being gory. The song dictates that there's a lot going on so I edited it as if I were throwing punches. It's not a pretty song." "War" is a tour de force for the director, utilizing a powerful prologue/epilogue and film from Vietnam and Central America in addition to the intense performance footage. Quick cuts punctuate the music, for what Marsh called "an agonizingly powerful video." The single went to number eight, certainly due in no small part to the impact of this clip. Profiling Bruce as *Rolling Stone*'s 1986 Artist of the Year, Anthony DeCurtis wrote, "Springsteen has followed the populist path of building his career by steadily expanding his audience—not by shedding some fans and adding new ones with each successive album release.... [but] the pointed stage rap that precedes the 'War' single and video; and the very choice of 'War' as a single suggest that Springsteen is presenting a sterner challenge to many of his followers." Several years later the video would have a slight return, played frequently on MTV in the first few days of the Desert Storm conflict.

For the record, Springsteen's introduction as included in the video: "If you grew up in the '60s, you grew up with war on TV every night—a war that your friends were involved in—and I want to do this song tonight for all the young people out there. If you're in your teens. Because I remember a lot of my friends when we were 17 or 18, we didn't have much of a chance to think about how we felt about a lot of things. And the next time, they're gonna be looking at you. And you're gonna need a lot of information to know what you're gonna wanna do. Because in 1985, blind faith in your leaders or in *anything* will get you killed. Because what I'm talkin' about here is..."

BRUCE SAYS: "When I go onstage, my approach is, 'I'm going to reach just one person'—even if there's 80,000 people there. Maybe those odds aren't so great, but if that's what they are, that's okay.... With [the 'War' introduction], I guess we were playing the percentages, you know?... a lot of people heard ['War'], and some people didn't hear it. I'm sure that when we're on tour, I'll be singing that song again. And maybe people that didn't hear it will hear it differently this time. My job is to make sure that they do. I never thought, 'Well, I'll do this because this feels like the *right* thing to do.' I did it because it was the *only* thing that I felt I could do."

—*Rolling Stone,* 1987



VIDEO HONORS: "War" was nominated for Best Stage Performance in a Video at the 1987 MTV Video Music Awards in 1987, along with the subsequent "Born to Run" video; both were beaten by Bon Jovi's "Livin' on a Prayer."

FIRE

DATE: October 13, 1986

LOCATION: Shoreline Amphitheatre, Mountain View, CA

DIRECTOR: None credited, though Rosato reportedly edited the piece.

PRE-PRODUCTION: When Springsteen joined the bill for Neil Young's Bridge School Benefit Concert, a rare 1986 performance, there were 2,000,000 requests for 17,000 seats. At the time of the performance, "Fire" had been a concert favorite—and a number two hit for the Pointer Sisters in 1979—but was not yet released by Springsteen in any form.

THE SHOOT: A few weeks before *Live/1975-85* would hit stores (it was released on November 10), Springsteen's acoustic performance provided a future video for the box's second single. Bruce played some of his set alone, including an a cappella "You Can Look" and a stripped-down "Born in the U.S.A.," before bringing out Danny Federici on accordion and Nils Lofgren on guitar and vocals, both of whom appear in the "Fire" video. This wasn't the only performance of that song at the Bridge show—Robin Williams' 20-minute set featured his Elmer-Fudd-does-Springsteen shtick. The Bridge line-up also included Neil Young, Tom Petty, Nils Lofgren, and Don Henley.

THE BIG PICTURE: "Fire" was released as a single in early 1987, accompanied appropriately enough by a live video. But no suitable footage existed from the *Live* version's source concert (a full E Street Band performance from 12/16/78), and this rendition, very different from the single itself, was selected for the video. "Fire" wound up missing the Top 40, Springsteen's first single since "Badlands" to do so.

IN REVIEW: "...when Springsteen indulges his erotic side, as he does in 'Fire,' he does it with wit." —Jim Farber, 1989 review of the *Video Anthology*

BORN TO RUN

DATE: 1985

LOCATION: *Born in the U.S.A.* tour, various locations

DIRECTOR: Arthur Rosato

PRE-PRODUCTION: "War" was reported to be the first of five videos that Rosato had been working on, presumably to promote *Live/1975-85.* However, sales of the box set stalled sooner than expected, and after "Fire" failed to hit the Top 40 charts in the spring of 1987, no third single was released in the U.S. Still, there continued to be a great deal of clamoring for Bruce video, cable and VHS releases. Rosato's production work at NFL Films hadn't gone unnoticed by fans, and reports of a concert film in the works circulated widely. Rosato himself, despite continued work with the footage, maintained that there were no concrete plans: "When you work with artists, you never know what is going to happen until it happens." He told Anthony DeCurtis, "It's like home movies. In general, if you know the way Bruce operates—you can see with his five-record set, it took him ten years to come out with some of that stuff."

THE BIG PICTURE: "Born to Run" was the last video clip to be culled from Rosato's extensive footage of *Born in the U.S.A.* performances, and perhaps more than any other captured the thrill of seeing the E Street Band live. Originally conceived for a BBC special, this clip opened the 90 minute *Glory Days* documentary, which premiered on BBC2 on May 12, 1987. Produced with the full cooperation of Bruce and his management, *Glory Days* included Springsteen's first interview since 1984, as well as concert footage from '75, '78, and '85. With sales of *Live/1975-'85* declining rapidly, *Glory Days* again piqued interest in Bruce in the UK, and "Born to Run" was issued there as an additional single from the box. Bruce reportedly loved Rosato's creation, and, wisely, chose it to stand alone as a video. This one immortalized the line, "Nobody wins unless everybody wins." Watch for cameos by Jon Landau (4:04), Little Steven (4:12 and 4:33), Julianne Phillips (4:21), and Pam Springsteen (4:28).

VIDEO HONORS: Nominated for Best Stage Performance in a Video at the 1987 MTV Video Music Awards. Chosen by *Backstreets* readers in 1990 as Best Officially Released Video Clip.

IN REVIEW: "Such posing [as in the 'Born in the U.S.A.' video] could have compromised Springsteen's populism, but clips like 'Born to Run,' from 1987, show why it didn't. 'Born to Run' offers a typically adoring compilation of concert scenes, but the effect is unique for this simple reason: The sense of identification that Springsteen inspires in his audience has blurred the line between performer and viewers so completely that the videos that exalt him do just the same for us." —Jim Farber, 1989 review of the *Video Anthology*

BRILLIANT DISGUISE

DATE: October, 1987

LOCATION: Sandy Hook, NJ

DIRECTOR: Meiert Avis. Avis was best known for shooting a great number of U2 videos, up to *Joshua Tree* at this point. Avis went on to direct videos for a long list of artists including Terence Trent D'Arby, Chris Whitley, and Patti Scialfa ("Lucky Girl" and "As Long As I (Can Be With You)"). Now a commercial director and co-founder of Windmill Lane Productions, a commercial production company in Santa Monica, CA.

PRE-PRODUCTION: *Tunnel of Love* was released October 6, and though members of the E Street Band contributed to the recording, it was Springsteen's closest thing to a solo record other than *Nebraska.* The first three videos from the album would feature Bruce without the Band.

THE SHOOT: Much of the early October shoot for this black-and-white chiller reportedly took place in the middle of the night. Utilizing live vocals, Avis told *Rolling Stone* that they did 20 takes, with Bruce going "from bitter to twisted to funny."

THE BIG PICTURE: The "Brilliant Disguise" single was released in September, and the video premiered on MTV on October 28, nearly a month after the song hit the Top 40. But the video didn't go unnoticed. Before D'Angelo, before Sinead O'Connor, the "Brilliant Disguise" video is solely a close-up of the artist, gradually zooming in further until Bruce's face fills the screen. Springsteen gazes unflinchingly at the camera for this meditation on deception; as Avis told *Rolling Stone:* "one of the things really good liars do is look you in the face." Even better is the lack of lip-syncing, as Springsteen actually sang the song for each take. Using live vocals for a non-stage performance brings a striking and uncommon level of realism to the video format that would serve him well on such future clips as "Better Days" and "Streets of Philadelphia."

VIDEO HONORS: #64 on Rolling Stone's 1993 list of the Top 100 Music Videos.

IN REVIEW: "If *Tunnel of Love* was his bummed-out wedding album, this is the wedding video: intimately emotional, starkly black-and-white. It's brilliant because of what it doesn't disguise." —Rick Marin, *Rolling Stone*

TUNNEL OF LOVE

DATE: November, 1987
LOCATION: Asbury Park, NJ and Seaside Heights, NJ
DIRECTOR: Meiert Avis

PRE-PRODUCTION: "Tunnel of Love," the second single, was released in late November, to be followed shortly by this video. With 1987 nearing its close and no tour plans announced, the "Tunnel" video would be the first glimpse of Springsteen's bolo-tied *Tunnel*-era image in action.

THE SHOOT: Filmed on location largely in Asbury Park, using both the Casino Arena and the Palace Amusements building at the southern end of the Asbury boardwalk. Springsteen's lip-synced performance was filmed in the Casino, a major concert venue in the '70s. The city granted Springsteen permission to film inside, even though by the late '80s the building was closed due to disrepair. The Palace Amusements building was still open, and during the shoot Springsteen spent a couple hours visiting the Asbury Park Rock and Roll Museum housed there. Springsteen was also filmed walking along the shore, and heading south on the boardwalk toward Ocean Grove.

THE BIG PICTURE: After all the imagery in his songs, this was the first video to document the Asbury Park landmarks so familiar to fans. And just in time, as the Palace wasn't open for much longer; after a century in business, the building closed (and evicted the Asbury Park Rock and Roll Museum) a year later on November 27, 1988. The Palace housed the song's original namesake, the Tunnel of Love ride. Once scheduled for demolition, the Palace has now been added to the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places, thanks largely to the efforts of Save Tillie, though the future of the building remains uncertain. The Palace's turn-of-the-century wooden carousel, which features prominently at the end of the video, is gone, too; its 70 hand-carved animals were removed and auctioned off in early 1989. In addition to the scene-setting amusement park footage, Avis directly echoes the song's symbolism with carnival and wedding imagery without being too heavy handed: images of sideshow attractions—sword swallower, tattooed man, snake lady—are later replaced by women in bridal gowns shot in the same style.

VIDEO HONORS: Nominated in four categories at the 1988 MTV Video Music Awards: Best Male Video, Best Video of the Year, Best Art Direction, and Best Editing.

ONE STEP UP

DATE: Mid-February, 1988
LOCATION: The Wonder Bar, Asbury Park, NJ, et al.
DIRECTOR: Meiert Avis

PRE-PRODUCTION: After rumors of a solo tour, the *Tunnel of Love* Express tour with the E Street Band was finally announced in early February. Springsteen had time to shoot one more video before the tour kicked off at the end of the month. "One Step Up" (backed with "Roulette") would be the last U.S. single and the last conceptual video from *Tunnel of Love*.

THE SHOOT: The second of Springsteen's videos to be filmed in Asbury Park, much of "One Step Up" was shot at the Wonder Bar, at 1213 Ocean Avenue, later renamed Zone One. Springsteen was also filmed lip-syncing the song, and Avis shot more stylistic footage without Springsteen.

THE BIG PICTURE: The Wonder Bar scenes, besides showing Bruce's "character" pondering that wedding ring, are also interesting for historical reasons: This is the club where Clarence Clemons was playing in the early '70s, with Norman Seldin's Joyful Noyze, when someone recommended he go over to the Student Prince to check out "Sensational Soul Man" Bruce Springsteen.

Springsteen's "Loose Change" from *Tracks,* recorded in 1991, could practically have been based on this video, from the "friendly little bar down along the coast," to the car waiting as the night moves "like a slow train crawling through this shithole town."

THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR: The February 15 Wonder Bar shoot included Springsteen made up as an old man, for a concept that was dropped in the editing stage.

DEBRA L. ROTHENBERG PHOTO

"Tunnel of Love"

TOUGHER THAN THE REST

DATE: April 27 and 28, 1988
LOCATION: Los Angeles Sports Arena, Los Angeles, CA
DIRECTOR: Meiert Avis

PRE-PRODUCTION: The conceptual videos for *Tunnel* were shot before the tour started, and it wasn't until the fourth video from the album that we see the E Street Band live.

THE SHOOT: Avis filmed live on April 27 and 28 at the Los Angeles Sports Arena, the last two nights of a five-show stand, roughly two months into the tour. At the time, *Backstreets* reported these shows were filmed "principally for a 'Tougher Than the Rest' video, though much more footage was shot."

THE BIG PICTURE: "One Step Up" was the last *Tunnel of Love* single released in the U.S., but "Tougher Than the Rest" and "Spare Parts" were numbers four and five in other countries. This live version of "Tougher" from the April 27 show was used as a B-side overseas, issued in the U.S. later in the year on the *Chimes of Freedom* EP.

While original promo material for the *Video Anthology/1978-88* listed the post-"One Step Up" *Tunnel* clips as having "never been seen before," this "Tougher Than the Rest" video did air on European television. The first live video from *Tunnel,* it presents a new stage set-up for the band, with Danny and Roy swapping sides, and Patti shifting into Clarence's old spot, not to mention the addition of the Horns of Love. Of the tour rehearsals, Bruce told Steve Pond: "The first thing I did was make everyone stand in a different place." Springsteen also mentioned that he had tried this at the *Born in the U.S.A.* tour rehearsals, but it didn't take.

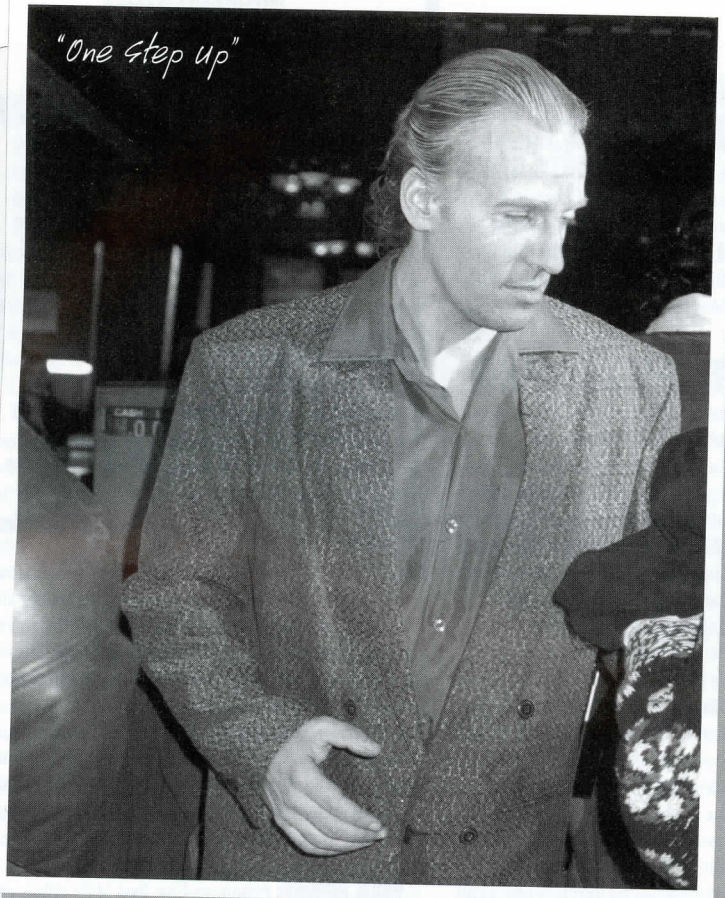
In addition to the new positions, the video also shows moments from other parts of the show: bandmembers stopping at the on-stage ticket booth, Bruce's somersault, the horns at the lip of the stage, Bruce pulling a woman from the crowd onstage in a much more spontaneous fashion than in "Dancing in the Dark." Though the song is a similar slow-burner, Avis avoids the static nature of the "My Hometown" video not only by presenting more images from the show, but also by intercutting footage of various couples filmed in black and white. Note that some of the couples that flash by are same-sex pairs (3:25 and 3:34), a gay-friendly move that predates "Streets of Philadelphia" by nearly six years.

SPARE PARTS

DATE: July 9, 1988
LOCATION: Bramall Lane Stadium, Sheffield, England
DIRECTOR: Carol Dodds. Dodds is credited with "Video" in *Tunnel* tourbook, presumably a comparable position to Rosato on the previous tour.

THE SHOOT: The first of two nights in Sheffield, a working-class town in England, right in the middle of the European leg. While the second night received better marks, *Backstreets* #26 reported, "The first night was called by many the weakest of the European tour. Bruce did not speak to the audience much, if at all, on either night." Springsteen did speak before "Spare Parts," though, as captured here; Dodds used footage not only from the show itself but of the local surroundings and fans outside the stadium, taking the viewer to the venue over the lengthy introduction.

THE BIG PICTURE: A more straightforward live document than "Tougher"—but lending itself well to spare production, with the horns playing a bigger part and an extended guitar lead from Bruce—this video aired on



DEBRA L. ROTHENBERG PHOTO

European TV as well before being released on the *Video Anthology.* Audio from this performance was released as the live B-side to "Spare Parts," the fifth and final single from the album in the UK and Holland. It was in Rome three weeks prior to this concert that Springsteen and Scialfa were photographed by paparazzi. When the "Spare Parts" single was issued, the picture sleeve had Springsteen's wedding band airbrushed out, and it appears in the video (at 2:41) that Bruce's fingers are bare.

BORN TO RUN (ACOUSTIC)

DATE: April 27 and 28, 1988

LOCATION: Los Angeles Sports Arena, Los Angeles, CA

DIRECTOR: Meiert Avis

PRE-PRODUCTION: Springsteen performed this acoustic version twice in 1987, on October 31 and December 13, before it became a tour regular in 1988.

THE SHOOT: Same as "Tougher Than the Rest"; "Born to Run" was performed later in the shows.

THE BIG PICTURE: The audio from April 27 was issued as a B-side overseas and on *Chimes of Freedom* in the U.S., but the video debuted as part of the *Video Anthology.* In Bruce's long spoken intro he explains that he wanted to "sing a *new* song. That's my *job.*" The acoustic version did make it most of the way through the tour, though by the last few nights of the tour, and on the Amnesty tour that followed, the song would be back to its full-blown band rendition. Watch for the audience chant at the end and Bruce's scrawled message to fans, the "closing shot" of the original *Anthology* release.

IN REVIEW: "That acoustic 'Born to Run'—collated on Springsteen's *Video Anthology 1978-88,* stood for a tour that, though wry and evocative, never raised the roof as the last had." —Christopher Sandford, *Point Blank*

BRUCE SAYS: "I wanted to separate 'Born to Run' from any way we've ever done the song before. I didn't want to crash into it like some old anthem or something, and I wanted to give people a chance to re-experience the song. And myself too. I guess in that song I asked every question I've been trying to answer since I was 24. I was young, and those were things I wanted to know. And 15 years down the line, you understand much clearer what those things are, and what they cost, and their importance. And I suppose, when I play the song now, I would imagine that you get some sense of that. I asked myself those questions at that age, and I really did faithfully, I feel, do everything I could to find some answers. The way you keep faith with your audience is not by signing autographs; it's by keeping faith with that initial search you set out on. I suppose this show is a—it's not a resolution by any means, but it is what I've learned and what I know." —1988, *Rolling Stone*

HUMAN TOUCH

DATE: Late January - early February, 1992

LOCATION: New Orleans, LA

DIRECTOR: Meiert Avis is still at the helm four years later. Since the *Tunnel* era, Avis directed a feature film, the 1989 thriller *Far From Home,* starring Drew Barrymore: "One boy wants her love. One boy wants her dead."

PRE-PRODUCTION: Since 1988, Springsteen "broke up" the E Street Band, remarried, had children, and moved to Los Angeles. Though he gave two highly regarded Christic Institute Benefit performances, Bruce spent three solid years keeping a very low public profile. On January 23, 1992, a press release announces *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town,* due simultaneously in the spring. The "Human Touch" video would be his visual return to the world.

THE SHOOT: Shot on location in New Orleans, when Bruce was in town for a January 30 listening party to premiere the new albums for Sony executives. While in the Big Easy he also jammed with the Iguanas, on February 2. Much of the "Human Touch" clip was shot on the St. Charles street car line, the oldest continually operated streetcar in the U.S. Interior shots were filmed in the Rabouin School's auditorium and at the former Stephens Chevrolet on Cardondelet Street.

THE BIG PICTURE: The "Human Touch" video had its MTV Premiere on March 9, just five days after the single was issued. In Italy, Sony debuted the video in open-air plazas, moving a large screen from square to square prior to the broadcast. The woman alone in a room, glimpsed briefly at 1:41, turns out to be the one Springsteen's character is on his way to see. The hand caressing a woman's body, from 5:22 on, belongs to a hand double, not Springsteen. Beginning with "Tunnel of Love," Avis used alternating light and shadow very effectively to make Springsteen's lip-sync less overt, and he continues it here. Though Bruce is lip-syncing rather than performing live, he's not pulling punches—by 5:42, he's broken a guitar string.

THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR: The *Anthology* clip is listed on Columbia notes as "Version B." A different version of the video later aired on *Friday Night Videos,* cutting in footage from the 1992-'93 band's first live performance, May 6, 1992, at the Bottom Line. Since the *Friday Night Videos* edit came later, "Version A" is likely yet another variant.

VIDEO HONORS: Nominated for Best Male Video, 1992 MTV Video Music Awards.

BETTER DAYS

DATE: Spring, 1992

LOCATION: Hollywood, CA

DIRECTOR: Meiert Avis. Avis also directed the "Series of Dreams" video for Bob Dylan in 1991—that song inspired "Living Proof," and in turn the rest of *Lucky Town.*

PRE-PRODUCTION: Springsteen used several studio musicians in the recording of *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town,* but would assemble a completely different road band around Easter. "Better Days," though a live "band" video, was recorded in the limbo period in between.

THE SHOOT: Filmed live at Hollywood Center Studios, Stage #4—the same location where Bruce would rehearse his new '92-93 touring band later that spring, and the "secret place" of their Dress Rehearsal broadcast on June 5. But, despite the *Anthology* credits, the '92-93 band doesn't exist at the time of this shoot; that's not Tommy Sims on bass or Zac Alford on drums. The video presents the same musicians who played on the studio version of "Better Days," all credited on *Lucky Town:* Randy Jackson and Gary Mallabar on bass and drums, and backup singers (R-L) Patti Scialfa, Lisa Lowell, and Soozie Tyrell—AKA the "Red Headed Women" of the 2000 Asbury Park holiday shows.

THE BIG PICTURE: The song itself was released simultaneously with "Human Touch" as a double-A side single on March 4, though this video came later. It was recorded live, down to Bruce's pre-song chatter—"You're gonna make me laugh..." Appropriately, "Better Days" presents a radiant Springsteen surrounded by friends and loved ones: In addition to the performers, there's sister Pam Springsteen (2:52), Chuck Plotkin (2:57), Terry Magovern (3:14), and Jon Landau (3:34).

BRUCE SAYS: "Generally if you're lip-synching, you're acting. You spend 20 years learning how to be a musician, not act! Whenever I see my own videos, there's always some isolation that occurs... there's always some blank space between what we're trying to communicate and what actually reaches the audience. Music is the score but it turns into a visual expression, and it's strange because you're not really playing. You're pretending you're playing, you're pretending you're singing, and that's what it looks like. I sang live in [the videos for]

"Better Days" and "Brilliant Disguise." It puts some glue between what's happening visually and what's happening aurally. It's occurring at the time of the shoot and it makes it more immediate." —1994, *MOJO*

57 CHANNELS (AND NOTHIN' ON)

DATE: Spring, 1992

LOCATION: Los Angeles, CA

DIRECTOR: Adam Bernstein, who had directed videos for They Might Be Giants, Ween, Dead Milkmen, Violent Femmes, B-52s, and Sir Mix a Lot's "Baby Got Back." Bernstein went on to direct several comedies—the *It's Pat* movie, "Strangers With Candy" and "Upright Citizens Brigade" for TV—as well as episodes of "Action" and "Homicide."

PRE-PRODUCTION: "57 Channels" premiered at the 1990 Christic shows as an acoustic romp; the brooding version on *Human Touch* came as somewhat of a surprise.

THE SHOOT: Likely occurred before late April, when the L.A. riots would provide the inspiration to infuse the song with a greater degree of social relevance for the live version and B-side remixes.

THE BIG PICTURE: The "57 Channels" single was released in June, and this concept video aired sporadically on MTV. Presumably, judging by his resume, Bernstein was hired to bring an off-beat, comedic sensibility to the video. But perhaps due to the dichotomy between the tone of the song and the tone of the video, not much of it works. Even the "money shot," of a car speeding through a wall of TV sets, doesn't pay off: the TVs appear to blow up before the car gets there. Note George Bush the elder as part of the "nothin' on" at 1:09. The '92-93 group is again credited as the band on this song, but they neither played on the recording nor appear in the video.

LEAP OF FAITH

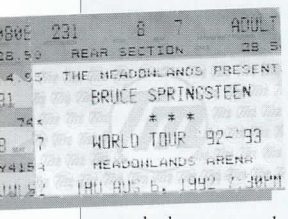
DATE: August 6, 1992

LOCATION: Brendan Byrne Arena, E. Rutherford, NJ

DIRECTOR: Meiert Avis returns for the last of his eight Springsteen videos to date.

PRE-PRODUCTION: After so many of his live performance clips from L.A., it was only after Springsteen relocated from New Jersey to California that he finally shot a live video at the Meadowlands. He told *Rolling Stone*'s James Henke, "I still love New Jersey. We go back all the time. I've been looking at a farm there that I might buy. I'd like my kids to have that, too."

THE SHOOT: After 15 European shows, the three-week stand at the Meadowlands was the opening of the U.S. tour. It was essentially trial by fire for the new band, whom Bruce declared "honorary New Jerseyans" at the end of the stand. The August 6 show, the ninth of 11, pumped up the hometown crowd with a rare "Local Hero" opener. "Leap of Faith" was performed twice during the show. Cameras had to capture the song's signature nightly ritual, Bruce's "leap" into the crowd, on the first take, as he didn't do it the second time through.



THE BIG PICTURE: The last stab at promoting the 1992 albums with a video, though the single wasn't even issued in the U.S. Overseas, this version served as a live B-side for the studio single. This is the only clip for which the *Anthology*'s '92-93 band credits are essentially correct, as they appear playing live. However, the credits still aren't entirely accurate, as Patti Scialfa was not a musician on this song. Performance footage of her was edited in (1:28), but she did not play on the song in concert.

THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR: Like "Rosalita," this clip is an edited version of the one originally released to MTV. Springsteen's introduction has been cut.

STREETS OF PHILADELPHIA

DATE: December 6 and 7, 1993

LOCATION: Philadelphia, PA and Camden, NJ

DIRECTORS: Jonathan Demme and Ted Demme. Ted, an early MTV producer responsible for "Yo! MTV Raps," went on to direct, among others, Denis Leary and Greg Dulli (of the Afghan Whigs) in several TV and movie projects. His films include *Beautiful Girls*, *Monument Ave.* AKA *Snitch,* and the recent *Blow.* Like Bernstein, he also helmed episodes of "Action" and "Homicide."

Jonathan, Ted's uncle, first approached Bruce in 1983 about starring in *Swing Shift.* He directed several videos in the mid-'80s including "Sun City" (with Godley and Creme), and such acclaimed films as the Talking Heads' *Stop Making Sense* and *Silence of the Lambs.* The director of *Philadelphia,* the elder Demme asked Bruce to write this song for the movie and has worked with Springsteen on several projects since.

PRE-PRODUCTION: In 1993, Springsteen was close to finishing another album about relationships when a call from Jonathan Demme—a request to pen a song for *Philadelphia*—changed Bruce's focus. He explained it succinctly when he later accepted a Golden Globe: "Jonathan asked me, and I was a fan of his pictures.... He gave me a general idea of emotionally what he might be looking for. I took a shot and he liked it. I'm glad it ended up in the picture."

THE SHOOT: In addition to more generic city scenes originally shot for *Philadelphia* and clips of Tom Hanks from the movie, Springsteen was filmed in several different settings around the city, mostly walking around South Philly. Some of the more notable locations: "A Tribute to Diego Rivera" mural, at the southeast corner of 17th and Wallace Streets; Solomon Sacks Playground, 400 Washington Avenue; and at the end of the video, Ulysses S. Wiggins Park—actually in Camden, NJ, but looking across the Delaware to the Philly skyline. For more detailed location information, see Shawn Poole's story at www.atlantic.net/~suzy/bruce/SOP-tour.html.

THE BIG PICTURE: "Streets of Philadelphia" was both Springsteen's most acclaimed song and biggest hit in years—it won both an Oscar and a Golden Globe—and accordingly, the video was aired more regularly than other recent clips. "Streets" premiered on MTV in early 1994, and was released officially on the *Philadelphia* laser disc before being compiled here. Like "Brilliant Disguise" and "Better Days," it's particularly notable for its use of a live vocal, which Springsteen sang while walking the streets. The Solomon Sacks Playground—where children are shown jumping rope, across from the anti-crack "Don't Believe the Pipe!" mural—received a $45,000 donation from Bruce after the video shoot. According to a manager at the Philadelphia Recreation Department, "[Bruce] said he could see the work the community and playground volunteers were doing, and he said he wanted to help. We sure could use it." Don't miss the Hitchcockian cameo from Jonathan Demme standing by the playground mural.

VIDEO HONORS: Nominated for Best Male Video, and won Best Video From a Film at the 1994 MTV Video Music Awards, where Bruce performed the song on 9/8/94.

THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR: Jazz singer Jimmy Scott, who contributed vocals to an unreleased version of the song, was also part of the video shoot, filmed singing with Springsteen. Scott's label, Sire, even made an announcement to that effect before an alternate version of the song was chosen and Scott edited out of the video.

MITCH GREENBAUM PHOTO

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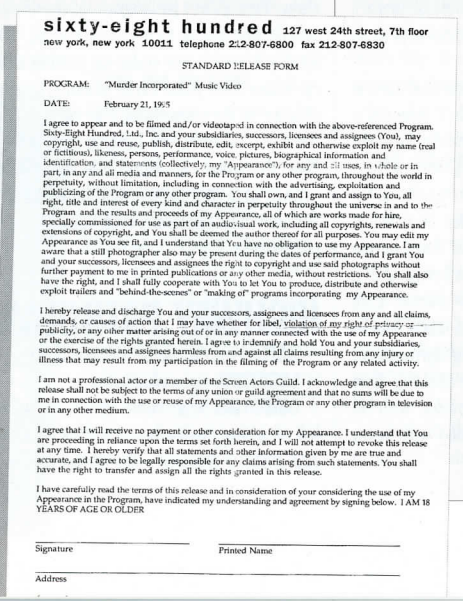
MURDER INCORPORATED

DATE: February 21, 1995
LOCATION: Tramps, New York, NY
DIRECTOR: Jonathan Demme.

PRE-PRODUCTION: Partly to have a vehicle for "Streets of Philadelphia," Springsteen prepared a *Greatest Hits* album in early 1995. He reunited the E Street Band in the studio in January to record extra material. "Murder Incorporated" was one of the "new" cuts on the album, in a version originally recorded for *Born in the U.S.A.*

THE SHOOT: Though the E Street Band didn't record the song in January, they performed it six times for a live video on February 21, a week before the release of *Greatest Hits.* Demme was at the helm for the Tramps shoot, and his longtime Director of Photography Tak Fujimoto behind the camera. This was Springsteen's first live performance with the E Street Band since October 15, 1988; though Steve Van Zandt had guested with the band since his departure—both on stage and in videos—this was his first gig as an E Streeter since *The River* tour. Bruce and the expanded band interspersed E Street classics throughout the five-hour shoot for a small crowd of roughly 300. Danny Federici told *Backstreets* in 1997, "We hadn't seen each other all together in such a long time until [the 1995 studio sessions].... When we were playing that show at Tramps, man there were a couple of songs that we hadn't laid our hands on in years that we played perfectly." Garry Tallent told the *Tennessean:* "We set up live in a club, and we hadn't played together in seven years, and went, 'okay, let's try some of the old songs.' It was amazing, everybody remembered their parts real well, and it sounded good, but it gave us a new perspective on what the band was all about. The kind of power that emanates when that group of people plays together is really very awe-inspiring. Even I'd forgotten in seven years."

THE BIG PICTURE: The Tramps version, recorded nearly 13 years after the album cut, would be released as an audio track (as a *Greatest Hits* B-side and on the *Blood Brothers* EP) and as this live performance video. "Murder Incorporated" did air, if rarely, on MTV and VH-1, debuting in March. See Ernie Fritz's *Blood Brothers* for behind-the-scenes film of the band at Tramps and a shoot of the shoot. In the video itself, unfortunately, Demme's footage can feel as cramped and claustrophobic as the club's stage. Though this is a long-awaited E Street reunion, it's sometimes hard to tell—as seen later in "If I Should Fall Behind," Demme does seem to love the close-up. But as opposed to the "Glory Days" video, seeing both Nils and Steve onstage here as full-fledged members of the E Street Band constituted a glimpse of the band's future—and on the 1999-2000 tour, this song would be played every night.



sixty-eight hundred 127 west 24th street, 7th floor
new york, new york 10011 telephone 212-807-6800 fax 212-807-6830

STANDARD RELEASE FORM

PROGRAM: "Murder Incorporated" Music Video

DATE: February 21, 1995

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SECRET GARDEN / SECRET GARDEN (WITH STRINGS)

DATE: 1995
LOCATION: Los Angeles, CA
DIRECTOR: Peter Care. Care directed numerous R.E.M. projects, including videos for "Drive" and "Man on the Moon" and, later, their 1996 *Road Movie.* He also directed videos for Depeche Mode, Tina Turner, and others; his latest project is the feature film *The Dangerous Lives of Altar Boys,* with Jodi Foster and Vincent D'Onofrio, in post-production as of early 2001.

PRE-PRODUCTION: Bruce originally recorded "Secret Garden" for his 1994 "relationship" album and described it to Robert Hilburn as "One of my men-and-women songs. It's about the unknowability of people in general." Though he shelved the album, this song was salvaged for the 1995 E Street sessions.

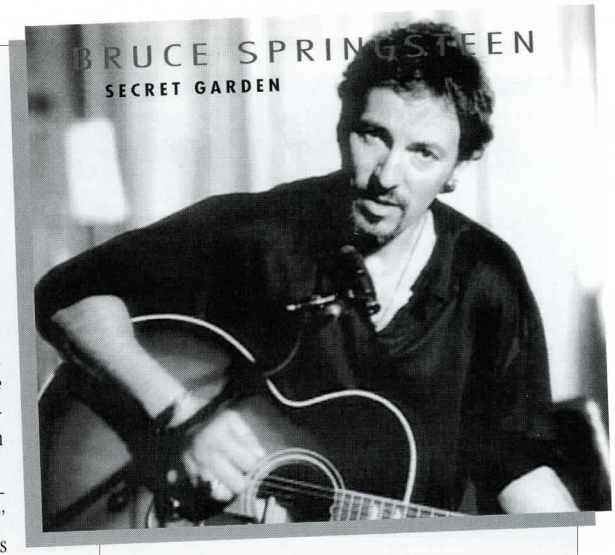
THE SHOOT: Bruce explained the song as "connected back [to] 'Brilliant Disguise' and the issues of the difficulty it takes for any two people to really get to know one another." "Brilliant Disguise" was clearly a reference point for the video as well, with intimate close-ups of an uncompromising performance—there's only one good way to deliver the line "she'll let you in her mouth," and Care allowed Springsteen to be suitably direct. Bruce lip-synced for the "Secret Garden" shoot, unlike "Brilliant Disguise." But Care combined this footage with images of women—the majority of whom were reportedly not models or actresses—in a way that complements the lyric without illustrating it. Thanks to Care's deft touch and to the cinematography of Salvatore Totino, "Secret Garden" is one of most powerful, alluring, and aesthetically pleasing videos of Springsteen's career. If Springsteen's "look" in the video seems particularly familiar, it's likely because photographer Neal Preston was on the set shooting stills. These photos of Preston's were used extensively for promotion, magazine articles, etc. in the mid-to-late '90s.

THE BIG PICTURE: The video and the single came and went quickly in 1995, and that might have been that if not for *Jerry Maguire.* With "Secret Garden" used in key scenes in the Cameron Crowe movie as well as its 1996 trailer, this long-form film accomplished what the short-form video didn't, and "Secret Garden" became a hit. Thanks specifically to a D.I.Y. *"Jerry Maguire* mix" played on radio, "Secret Garden" hit the Top 40 in early 1997, after being off playlists for nearly two years. The video followed suit: it was in heavy rotation on VH-1 that spring. The video also provided a new picture sleeve for the reissued UK single in April, with a Preston photo as the cover and a still from the video on the back.

The video for the "Strings" version of the song, appearing here for the first time, is virtually identical. See *Blood Brothers* for more on the arrangement by David Kahne. Like the live "Murder Inc.," the string version was released as a B-side and on the *Blood Brothers* EP.

VIDEO HONORS: Nominated for Best Video From a Film at the 1997 MTV Video Music Awards.

THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR: When *Jerry Maguire* breathed new life into the single, a new cut of the video was also created, incorporating scenes from the movie. With "Secret Garden" appearing twice on *Video Anthology,* it's odd that the original video edit was used both times.



HUNGRY HEART (BERLIN '95)

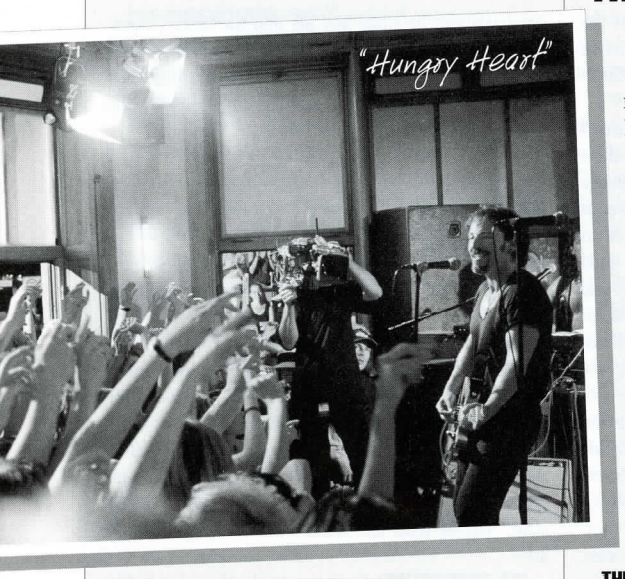
LOCATION: Cafe Eckstein and various, Berlin, Germany
DATE: July 9, 1995
DIRECTORS: Rudi Dolezal and Hannes Rossacher, A.K.A. DoRo A.K.A. "The Torpedo Twins," who also receive production credit for the video. Dolezal and Rossacher have also done work for Falco, the Rolling Stones, and David Bowie, though they are best known for their extensive work with Queen. The liner notes of *Queen Rocks* state: "For us, Rudi and Hannes are the kings of video art."

PRE-PRODUCTION: Wolfgang Niedecken, along with his band BAP, is a rock star in his own right in his home country. While shooting his own video in New York with DoRo, Niedecken wound up covering the E Street Band's April 1995 Sony Studios gig for German TV. He interviewed Springsteen, and the two reportedly hit it off. "Hungry Heart," meanwhile, was planned as a European single for that summer, and Bruce's first top ten hit had never had a video.

THE SHOOT: Bruce spent much of the day—reportedly the hottest day of the year in Berlin—being filmed in various locations in Berlin, both on foot and behind the wheel of a car. Brandenburger Tor, normally closed to traffic, was opened to accommodate the filming. For the performance footage, Springsteen was joined by Niedecken and other musicians—not BAP, but including several members of his Dylan covers combo, the Leopardefell-band—at Cafe Eckstein. Christopher Sandford described the venue in *Point Blank* as "a down-at-the-heels dive in flaking red brick, squeezed by rising new construction. A heavy metal door gave on to mouldy green drapes and a bar lit by ugly, geometric-patterned neon. It was hard to imagine it being in any bloc other than the ex-Soviet." A make-shift stage was set up specifically for the shoot, and the doors to the street opened wide. Ralf Dissman covered the shoot in *Backstreets* #50/51: "They had organized a few models to join the crowd, and the director even reshuffled the crowd a few times (short and good-looking females to the front...) You might spot the models in the video: they look good but don't know any lyrics to

'Hungry Heart' or any other songs." In addition to seven takes of "Hungry Heart"—"all fueled by König-pilsener," according to Sandford—Springsteen and the assembled band jammed on a series of Dylan covers and classics, as well as "Glory Days" and "Thunder Road." Newspapers quoted Bruce as doing the shoot in Berlin "to thank my loyal fans in Germany."

THE BIG PICTURE: Filmed primarily for a European audience, the "Hungry Heart" video was seen overseas but never aired in the U.S. Curiously, the clip drops the live audio of the band—reportedly not up to snuff, whether in performance or sound or both. Instead, the live vocals were mixed with the original E Street Band instrumental track, for a version referred to as "Berlin '95" rather than "live." If you want to hear Niedecken do the song, he and his band BAP released a live cover on their "Anunfürsich" CD single.



DEAD MAN WALKIN'

DATE: January 22, 1996

LOCATION: The Saengor Center, New Orleans, LA

DIRECTOR: Tim Robbins. While his acting credits include nearly 40 films, Robbins has directed three to date including *Dead Man Walking,* the film that inspired this song. Robbins' significant other, Susan Sarandon, played Sister Helen Prejean in the film.

PRE-PRODUCTION: In 1994, Bruce told interviewer Richard Wilkin, "The basic theme of *[Philadelphia]* started to turn me naturally outside, and I started to write in other people's voices again in a sense." The creation and success of "Streets" not only marked Bruce's return to social observation, it opened up motion pictures as a new avenue for his work. The following year brought two new songs for films, both involving Sean Penn. For *The Crossing Guard,* written and directed by Penn, Bruce contributed "Missing," a song that has sadly fallen between the cracks, with no soundtrack album available and no live performance to date. "Dead Man Walkin'," from the film starring Penn as convicted killer Matthew Poncelet, was issued on the soundtrack and has been a semi-regular in Bruce's live repertoire ever since.

THE SHOOT: Live, solo acoustic footage was filmed at Springsteen's January 22, 1996, concert in New Orleans, part of the *Tom Joad* tour. The performance was dedicated to Sister Helen Prejean, who was in attendance. Prejean, a New Orleans nun working a few hours away at Angola State Prison (where Leadbelly did time), wrote the book upon which *Dead Man Walking* was based.

THE BIG PICTURE: The video was edited quickly, within two weeks of the New Orleans concert. Retaining the live audio from the show, the video artfully mixes live footage with scenes from the movie. While "Dead Man Walkin'" was not issued as a commercial single in the U.S., the video itself did premiere in the States on February 5, 1996. Rarely aired, though, the video was created as much to promote the movie as the song. It intercut scenes from the film with live footage and became part of *Dead Man Walking*'s Oscar campaign. Springsteen received his second Academy Award nomination for the song and performed it with a full band for the live broadcast of the Oscar ceremony on March 25. He rescheduled European *Joad* tour dates in order to be there.

THE GHOST OF TOM JOAD

DATE: 1996

DIRECTOR: Arnold Levine.

PRE-PRODUCTION: After the *Greatest Hits* reunion, Springsteen contemplated an E Street Band record as his next move rather than the relationship album that was still sitting near-completion. The creative process would take him in an altogether different direction, as he told Gary Graff: "I had a record that I did that was a more personal type of record, and I didn't feel like I quite got it and it wasn't finished and it wasn't quite right. I think 'The Ghost of Tom Joad' we were going to do as a rock song for the band record. But as I got into it, all of a sudden I began to—I had 'Straight Time,' 'Highway 29'—get into that groove, kind of film noir." He told Charlie Rose in 1998, "Once I did it, I found a great satisfaction in it, and also, it had been about a decade since I'd really written directly about those things, and I think that I felt refreshed." *The Ghost of Tom Joad* was released on November 21, 1995.

THE SHOOT: Bruce told Rose, "I'd been living in California for a while and reading a lot of different kinds of stories in the newspaper and traveling up through the Central Valley to visit my folks, who lived up north. And I saw a lot of the same stories being acted out in different ways, and all of a sudden that was something I really wanted to write about. It was about re-finding that place in myself… that's really how the song 'Tom Joad' came about." Springsteen's sister Pamela took photos that evoked that place and those stories, and this video for the album's title cut consists entirely of these photographs, later edited into a montage. While Pam herself appeared in cameos in previous videos, this is the first of Bruce's videos to use her photography. Her photos also appear in the *Tom Joad* tourbook.

THE BIG PICTURE: It made perfect sense that Levine would be brought back to direct; he hadn't directed a Springsteen video since "Atlantic City," and Springsteen hadn't released an album like *Tom Joad* since *Nebraska.* As if following Springsteen's original instructions for the "Atlantic City" video, the "Joad" video consists of images that evoke the spirit of the song but don't necessarily align directly with the lyrics, and here Levine uses a framing device suggestive of a rear-view mirror. Like "Atlantic City," the "Tom Joad" video is a stark, black-and-white piece that, rather than featuring Springsteen, reveals a darker underbelly of America. *The Ghost of Tom Joad* was also promoted similarly to *Nebraska,* with no singles released in the U.S., and this video was never shown.

THE GHOST OF TOM JOAD ("THE TONIGHT SHOW")

DATE: November 27, 1995

LOCATION: Los Angeles, CA

DIRECTOR: Ellen Brown

PRE-PRODUCTION: "The Ghost of Tom Joad" was debuted live a month prior to this performance, at the October 28 Bridge Benefit, dedicated to "the Gingrich mob." The song was also the departure point for the creation of the live *Joad* show. Bruce told Gary Graff that when he was coming up with a live set, rehearsing for a week in an old Los Angeles theater, he told himself, "I'll start with 'The Ghost of Tom Joad' and see where it takes me." Springsteen embarked on his year-and-a-half-long solo acoustic tour for *The Ghost of Tom Joad* tour less than a week before this taping and had played the song live a total of four times.

THE SHOOT: During the afternoon between two L.A. concerts at the Wiltern Theater, 11/26 and 27, Springsteen gave this performance at the taping of "The Tonight Show." Also appearing on the program were Tony Danza and "Dr. Rot." Bruce would perform "Youngstown" on the Letterman show a few weeks later—a song entirely absent from the *Anthology,* while "Joad" appears in two versions.

THE BIG PICTURE: Springsteen told Robert Hilburn, "For the music to work, you have to have silence. These songs come to life in the quiet, and I knew intrusions on that quiet would chip away at the mood you are trying to convey." Unfortunately, the video is marred somewhat by muddy sound and obtrusive background noise. Like "Streets of Philadelphia," this song was performed a number of times on broadcast television; a video for "Joad" could just as well have been taken from performances such as the 1997 Grammys or a 1998 *Rolling Stone* TV special, which presented the song accompanied by a full band. The "Tonight Show" version was previously included in part in the 1998 BBC special, *Bruce Springsteen: A Secret History.*

BRUCE SAYS: "I've thought about [a solo tour] since *Nebraska,* but *Nebraska* sort of happened by accident. A planned kind of accident, but enough of an accident that I didn't really think that was something I was going to tour with. I thought about it again when I did *Tunnel of Love,* but *Tunnel of Love* was in between a group record and a solo record, and I still couldn't quite imagine going out onstage by myself at that point. We did rehearsals where it was just me and a sit-down band and—I hate to use the word—an "unplugged"-style show. That didn't feel right—if there's a band on stage, people are going to want you to go, 'One, two, three, four,' y'know? So we ended up putting a big tour together. So when *Tom Joad* came about I thought, 'This is the chance to do something I've been waiting to do for a while.'… Really, the bottom line is that, through the '90s, the voice I've found, the voice that's felt the most present and vital for me, had basically been a folk voice. It really hasn't been my rock voice." —1996, *New Musical Express*

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN

DATE: 1991 (filmed)/2000 (edited)

LOCATION: Nebraska/Iowa

DIRECTOR: Sean Penn. Like Robbins, Penn has a long list of acting credits but has directed three films to date: *The Indian Runner, The Crossing Guard,* and *The*

Pledge, all well received. He also directed Jewel's "You Were Meant For Me" video.

PRE-PRODUCTION: *The Indian Runner,* Penn's directorial debut which he also produced and scripted, was inspired directly by the story told in Springsteen's "Highway Patrolman" from 1982.

THE SHOOT: Penn's original film—with David Morse as Joe, Viggo Mortensen as Frank, and Valeria Golino as Maria—premiered in 1991. Roger Ebert called it a "thoughtful, surprisingly effective directing debut." *The Indian Runner* was actually filmed in Nebraska (Omaha and Plattsmouth, as well as Council Bluffs, IA); Penn wrote in an AOL on-line chat, "I had a tremendous time shooting in Nebraska. I like that state a lot, all over it." Created by editing scenes from the movie, this 2000 video for the song was based on a movie that was based on the song.

BRUCE SAYS: "The main thing with my songs right now is that I write them to be complete things, and they're filled with a lot of geographical detail and a lot of detail about what people are wearing, where they live. The thing about a video is that you only really have a few choices about what you can do. Either you illustrate a song, which in my case I can't do—because it's like you're gonna paint a mustache on it or something. Or you create another story to go over the song, and that's kinda silly, because there's a story already there."

—1984, in Dave Marsh's *Glory Days*

THE BIG PICTURE: This video interpretation makes its debut on the *Anthology.* Love it or hate it, the bottom line: "Highway Patrolman" gets a mustache.

IF I SHOULD FALL BEHIND

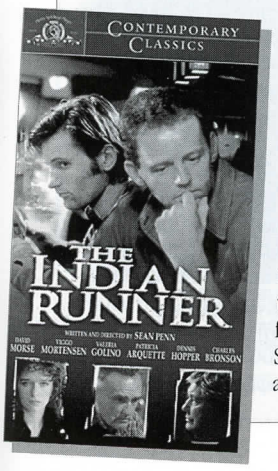
DATE: September, 1999

LOCATION: First Union Center, Philadelphia, PA

DIRECTOR: Jonathan Demme. His third Springsteen video, and his first since 1995, is a reunion in Philadelphia.

PRE-PRODUCTION: "If I Should Fall Behind," originally on 1992's *Lucky Town*, was issued as a 1993 single in Europe but without a promotional video. With the reinvented E Street Band version (first performed on March 18, 1999) quickly becoming a highlight of the reunion tour, Demme was hired to direct a live clip.

THE SHOOT: The 1999 "birthday" stand—Springsteen turned 50 during the six-night run in Philly—was a true standout of the 1999-2000 tour. *Backstreets* readers voted the last two nights, 9/24 and 9/25 two of the five strongest shows of the entire tour. Rather than during one of the actual concerts, Demme filmed Springsteen and the E Street Band performing the song at soundcheck. The video was shot on 16mm film, with Kyle Rudolph the Director of Photography.



THE BIG PICTURE: Springsteen fans got a teaser in the Spring 2000 issue of *DoubleTake,* where a double-page frame from the video was captioned "From *If I Should Fall Behind.* A 16mm documentary." However, the video itself remained unreleased until the new *Anthology.* The extremely tight framing and lack of multiple angles has struck some fans as peculiar, and the E Streeters who don't sing do not appear in the video. An empty arena at soundcheck could account for the necessity of the close-up, and there's no denying the beautiful lighting and crisp picture for what's in the frame. But couldn't something have been done about the bum note in Clarence's solo?

FROM *DOUBLETAKE*, SPRING 2000

THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR: Demme reportedly shot the song during the concert first, but the result apparently proved unsatisfactory, hence the soundcheck version. It's likely that after nearly three hours of live performance, Bruce and the rest of the band were too sweaty and disheveled for this kind of extreme close-up. Demme also filmed in Chicago.

BORN IN THE U.S.A. (FROM "CHARLIE ROSE")

DATE: November 20, 1998

LOCATION: New York, NY

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Charlie Rose

PRE-PRODUCTION: Springsteen dramatically reworked "Born in the U.S.A." in an acoustic version for the 1986 Bridge show. In 1987 he told the BBC's David Hepworth, "It's not that people aren't taught to think, but that they're not taught to think hard enough. 'Born in the U.S.A.' is not ambiguous. All you gotta do is listen to the verses. If you don't listen to the verses, you're not gonna get the whole song, you're just gonna get the chorus.... What you do if someone doesn't understand your song is you keep singing it." Bruce performed it acoustically on the '93 European leg and on the *Tom Joad* tour. All of which served to bring the song back to its roots as demonstrated in the *Nebraska* version on *Tracks,* the box set which precipitated Springsteen's appearance on *Charlie Rose.*

THE SHOOT: Less than two weeks after the release of *Tracks,* Springsteen appeared on Charlie Rose's PBS program (show #2296), with the standard interview format accounting for most of the hour and this performance at the end. Rose says, "You're going to perform for us," and Bruce says simply, "Yeah, I'm going to sing a song." Eric Alterman, author of *It Ain't No Sin to Be Glad You're Alive: The Promise of Bruce Springsteen,* was the one to hand Springsteen his guitar off-camera.

THE BIG PICTURE: Springsteen wrote in *Songs:* "Over the years I've had the opportunity to reinterpret 'Born in the U.S.A.' many times in concert. Particularly on the *Tom Joad* tour, I had a version that could not be misconstrued. But those interpretations always stood in relief to the original and gained some of their new power from the audience's previous experience with the original version." The new *Video Anthology* preserves that relief, with the two very different versions on disc one and disc two.

"Born in the U.S.A." became the prime promotional piece for *Tracks,* as Springsteen performed the song repeatedly for European TV on a whirlwind "advance promotional" tour at the end of 1998. The song was also performed (and filmed) at the Amnesty International Concert at Bercy Stadium in Paris on December 10. After all this "reclaiming," Maybe it's no wonder that when the tour started a few months later he was ready to try it again with the band. But Springsteen went back to the stripped-down performance for the remainder of the 1999-2000 tour.

BRUCE SAYS: "The record of it I still feel is very good and I wouldn't change it or want it to be different. I wouldn't want the version that I'm doing now to have come out at that time. At that particular moment, it was how I heard it and it happened in a couple of takes.

—1996, *NME*

THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR: In its original presentation, Charlie Rose's interview gave more context for the performance. His remarks to Rose about inclusion of the song on *Tracks* implied a change of heart from earlier statements, as he suggested that "Born in the U.S.A." should have gone on *Nebraska* after all: "I didn't think it was finished, and it was one of my first songs about Vietnam... I wanted to make sure I had it right, and I wasn't quite sure that I'd finished it. Listening back, it came out pretty good, really. And I think now I might have—if I was making that decision today, I probably would have put it on *Nebraska.* But you know, at the moment, I was careful with it. See, I was recording *Nebraska* and *Born in the U.S.A.* simultaneously. And so I had sort of these two very different things going on, and one of the first things we did was cut the band version of 'Born in the U.S.A.' And when I heard that, I felt that that was really powerful, and I knew that that was going to be the centerpiece of the music I was doing at that time, and so I went with the band version."

LIFT ME UP

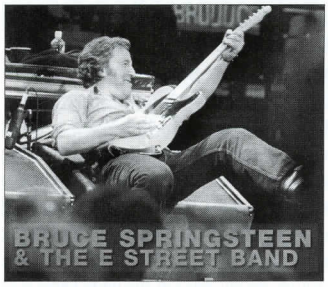
Audio-only bonus track, which plays over the *Anthology* credits. "Lift Me Up" marks Springsteen's return to working with John Sayles for the first time since 1985—Bruce originally contributed the song to the director's 1999 film, *Limbo* (it plays during the credits there, too). First heard in May of 1999, when *Limbo* had its premiere at the Cannes Film Festival, and later released as the opening cut on the *Limbo* soundtrack, "Lift Me Up" was Bruce's first released song recorded entirely in falsetto. It was such a complete vocal departure that many in theaters had no idea it was Bruce singing.

ON COLLECTING

By Richard Breton and Fred Mills

For the benefit of our readers, *Backstreets* magazine provides ratings of unauthorized releases currently in circulation. Don't write us asking where these can be obtained. *Backstreets* in no manner, shape, or form endorses these recordings. These reviews are provided by our columnists solely for informational purposes. Despite these words of warning, some collectors will still seek this material out, and for those collectors, our reviews should help you steer clear of the real losers.

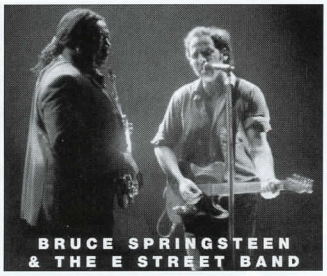
Unauthorized CDs are growing in numbers and with that growth, expect some real rip-offs—our advice is let the buyer beware, and demand to listen to material before you buy it. Each title here has been rated for packaging, performance, and sound quality on a scale from one to ten, one being awful, and ten being quality generally found on legitimate releases.



•Frisco Second Night
(Crystal Cat, 3CD)
Sound: 10
Performance: 8
Packaging: 8

•Frisco Third Night
(Crystal Cat, 3CD)
Sound: 10
Performance: 9
Packaging: 9

Crystal Cat's oddly-titled versions of the October 26 and 28, 1999 Oakland concerts goes head-to-head with Piggham's pair of CD-Rs, *The Light Of Omaha* and *Sinaloa Cowboys in Oakland*. See the last issue of *Backstreets* for



comments on those discs; meanwhile, which to choose?

An A-B comparison of the two labels' efforts suggests that while both worked hard to overcome some of the well-known limitations of Assisted Listening Device (ALD) recordings (in particular, the flat soundboard-like dynamics) by boosting audience ambiance, the Crystal Cats sound "brighter," with a broader dynamic range. But only subtly so—no one owning either set of shows should have cause to complain.

As usual, CC has gone all-out with the packaging and full-color artwork. More excerpts from the interview transcript of the BBC documentary turn up in the booklets, and *Second Night* adds Joel Selvin's Oct. 27 *San Francisco Chronicle* review of the concert. What may tip the scales for the collector are the CC bonus tracks (Piggham's had none). *Second Night* includes five from Minneapolis (11/29/00) and four from the September '99 Philadelphia run; all are ALD recordings available elsewhere (Scorpio's *The Last Show of the Century* and Polar Bear's *Backstreets of Philadelphia* box, respectively). *Third Night* taps three sources for its bonus tracks: the familiar 3/15/99 Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame ceremony songs ("Promised Land," "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out," "In the Midnight Hour"); plus two more Philly tracks, one ALD ("Raise Your Hand," from the Polar Bear box) and one audience (a rousing "Little Queenie" performed on 9/21).

Meanwhile, the Cat has promised *Frisco First Night* (Oakland, 10/25/99), also reportedly an ALD recording. Watch this space for details. —*FM*

•Legendary Night
(Crystal Cat - 3CD)
Sound: 8
Performance: 9
Packaging: 8

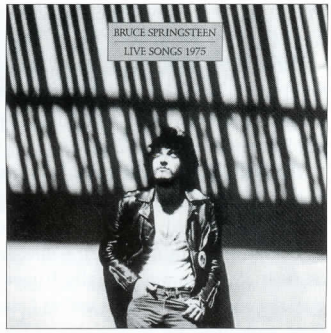
This is taken from the final night of the 2000 tour, on July 1 at Madison Square Garden in NYC. As good as the official live album (taken largely from this night) will be—and it will be great—much of the show will be missing from the official live CD. This is the entire concert, warts and all. There were several nights during the MSG stand that were equally fine—I'm not sure I would classify this particular show as "legendary"—but none that contained the surprises on this particular night.

At 28 songs and well over the three-hour mark, this was easily the longest show of the tour. Emotions ran high this night for Bruce, the band, and the crowd. There were many moments that make this set special, but none so much as the following three: the point when the crowd realizes that Bruce and the band are actually playing "Lost in the Flood"; that special time toward the end of the show when the crowd takes over the arena with the "E Street Band" chant; and the tour debut of "Blood Brothers" with

changed lyrics as the finale - you can hear the emotion in Bruce's voice, and in the crowd's response.

While the sound on this set is less than stellar, it is still slightly better than the circulating tapes of this show. Though you can clearly hear Bruce and the band, they're not as upfront as I'd like, and the louder parts of the show sound a bit muddy. On the plus side, the recording is even throughout with a minimum of audience interference. There are some bonus tracks included, which are nice but are rather unnecessary.

If it's sound quality you're looking for, a little label called Sony is treating this show right—and anyone who has ever spent a dime on bootlegs will (and should) certainly shell out for the official album. But for the missing pieces—and the show in its original running order—Crystal Cat gets the job done. —*RB*



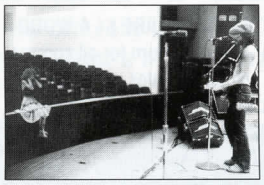
•Live Songs 1975
(Super Sonic, 2CD)
Sound: 6
Performance: 9
Packaging: 9

Bruce collectors who eagerly snapped up this silver-disc pressing of the soundboard from the September 26, 1975, Iowa City show no doubt kicked themselves hard a couple of times when they opened up the last issue of *Backstreets*. There was Rich Breton's enthusiastic review of Piggham's 2-CDR version of the same show, *Meeting Across the River*, whose sound was deemed to provide "a major upgrade to the existing circulating tapes." Super Sonic's set is adorned with crisp graphics (classy b&w photos, repros of handwritten lyrics to "Meeting Across The River" and "E Street Shuffle"), and at first blink, it does sound good. But Piggham's sounds ten times better.

For one thing, the levels are significantly higher on the Piggham set, while Super Sonic's are so low that boosting the volume inevitably boosts hiss. Piggham's is clearer, too; the porky UK label is becoming known for putting care into remastering.

Finally, while both share a couple of unfortunate cuts and edits (see Rich's prior comments), Super Sonic opted to omit two entire songs. Granted, both "Born to Run" (slotted between "She's the One" and "E Street Shuffle") and "Jungleland" (between "Kitty's Back" and "Rosalita") contained some of the more significant edits. But timewise, there was no good reason for Super Sonic to leave them off; both fit easily onto Piggham's edition. If Super Sonic's original tapes lacked the tunes, that's understandable. And this set may be easier to find than Piggham's, which typically limits its runs to 200 copies. Just the same: *caveat emptor*. —*FM*

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN



WESTBURY MUSIC FAIR

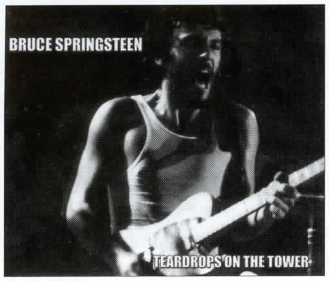
•Westbury Music Fair
(Main Stream, 3CD)
Sound: 7
Performance: 8
Packaging: 8

This Suki Lahav-era, pre-*Born to Run* tour show comes from a very nice (for its time) audience tape recorded on February 23, 1975, at the titular fair in Westbury, NY. It's a slightly expanded, possibly upgraded, version of the same show that yielded Parrot's *The Greatest Performance,* detailed in Volume 3 of Lynn Elder's *You Better Not Touch* guides. As Lynn pointed out, while it's a fine concert with some real gems in the setlist ("I Want You," "Incident on 57th Street," "NYC Serenade"), for someone seeking a definitive document of this stage in Bruce's performing career, *The Saint, the Incident & the Main Point Shuffle* from 2/5/75 is the one to hunt down.

That said, it's hard not to recommend Main Stream's edition. Not only has the final encore of "Quarter to Three" been restored (it was missing from the Parrot set), the sound does seem somewhat "brighter"—either the result of remastering or simply better transfer equipment. Though there is no booklet, the black-and-white photos gracing the double-sided front and rear tray panels are to die for: a candid of Bruce at soundcheck, close-ups of him in beard and leather jacket, sharp concert shot of him and Suki.

There are some very minor flaws present, including mic muffling and a glitch at 9:50 in "Kitty's Back." The show runs 149 minutes and would have been fit on two 80-minute discs. Nevertheless, thumbs-up for this 'un.

—*FM*



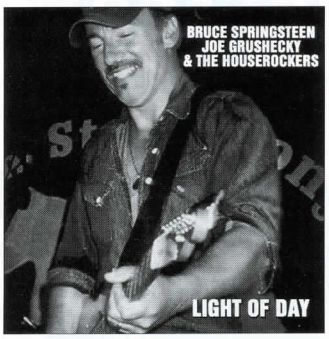
•Teardrops on the Tower
(Palace, 4CD-R)
Sound: 7
Performance: 9
Packaging: 7

The official end of the *Born to Run* tour in 1975 was marked by a four-night residency at the Tower Theater in Philadelphia. This title is taken from the final two nights, December 30 and 31. There were 22 different songs played over these two particular nights, and eight of these were covers. But since the setlists are nearly identical, you'll find 21 of them on the 12/30 portion of this set alone ("Pretty Flamingo" was exclusive to the shorter 12/31 show). So there's a fair bit of song repetition here, but that doesn't mean that the performances each night were identical.

This run of shows was notable for containing the only performances of a full-band slow-version of "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out," which starts out at about half-tempo with just Bruce and the keyboards and slowly builds up to the full band on the choruses. Only performed the last 3 nights, the two versions included here are great.

As with most of the circulating soundboards from 1975, these are not without their problems. The beginnings of several songs are clipped, a few are missing the entire intro, and a couple are joined in progress. There are a few drop-outs, and a few songs are missing entirely—the 12/31 source tapes missed "4th Of July, Asbury Park (Sandy)" along with at least half of "The Detroit Medley." It's fortunate in a way that the setlists for these shows were so similar—the same songs on this set aren't missing the same bits or suffering similar edits.

Soundwise, there is a fair amount of tape hiss. Tape azimuth alignment problems plague both shows as well, with shifts in focus between the stereo channels, in-and-out treble frequencies, etc. But all things considered, they still sounds better than most versions being traded. While this certainly isn't the best of the 1975 soundboards, aficionados of the tour should be pleased overall. —*RB*



•Light Of Day
(Palace, 2CD-R)
Sound: 9
Performance: 8
Packaging: 7

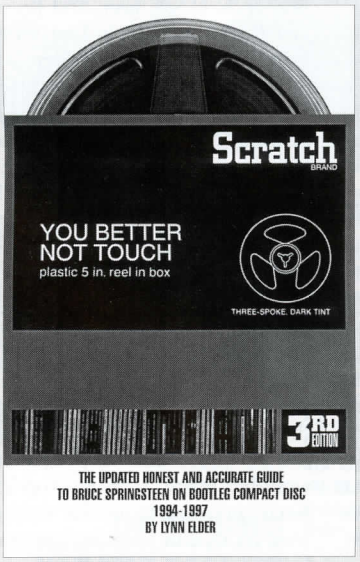
Briefly noted, this is the first release (of no doubt many to come) culled from the soundboard tape of the November 3, 2000, Stone Pony Parkinson's Disease benefit show discussed in great detail in the last issue of *Backstreets.* It sounds every bit as good as early reports indicated, kicking off with two numbers performed by Grushecky and his band ("Labor of Love," "Brand New Cadillac") then commencing with the Joe/Bruce collaboration. It winds up two hours later, with a crammed stage tearing the walls down on versions of "Twist and Shout" and "I Don't Wanna Go Home."

Palace (a new label that debuted with *Teardrops on the Tower*) has put together a nicely designed package with full-color artwork, color picture labels on the CD-Rs, and an excerpt from the *Asbury Park Press* account of the concert. But one thing is missing: Bob Benjamin's request, also noted in *Backstreets,* that anyone obtaining a copy of the show please donate to the Parkinson's Disease Foundation. So here it is again, and (cue up guilty-conscience music) maybe Palace can correct that oversight. Contact: Parkinson's Disease Foundation, William Black Medical Bldg./Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center, 710 W 168th St, NYC 10032-9982; website www.pdf.org. —*FM*

•Copenhagen Night
(Crystal Cat, 3CD)
Sound: 9
Performance: 9
Packaging: 9

As outlined in the review of Piggham's *Copenhagen Rain* CD-R version of the June 26, 1999,

Continued page 36



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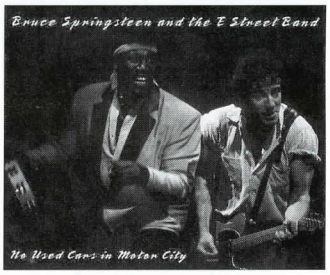
Copenhagen concert (see *Backstreets #66*), the outdoor stadium show was accompanied by a steady downpour. This is the night where Bruce broke out a special "Who'll Stop The Rain" to kick things off. Piggham's sported remarkable sound for the conditions, and Crystal Cat's sonics are equivalently fine—so close, in fact, that one suspects CC simply copied Piggham. The giveaway comes when comparing between-song crowd sounds. Not that there's anything wrong with that—it's a time honored tradition among bootleggers, and CC may have performed some of its typical remastering wizardry. The booklet has another one of Crystal Cat's excerpts from the BBC interview, and there's a Danish magazine cover and article (in Danish) reproduced as well. Though by CC standards the booklet, at only eight pages, is relatively slim.

The bonus tracks do bear noting. Five songs plus a snippet of the soul classic "My Girl" sung by Patti (lifted from the "Tenth Avenue" band intros) come from the closing Euro show, June 27 in Oslo. "My Love Will Not Let You Down," "Darkness," "Mansion On The Hill," "The River" and "Jungleland" appear, all in inspired, fine-sounding form. Most likely they were taken from another Piggham title, *Oslo Finale*, given that Crystal Cat hasn't mounted its own version of the complete show. —*FM*

•No Used Cars in Motor City
(Piggham, 3CD-R)
Sound: 7
Performance: 10
Packaging: 6

This is the first time the 7/31/84 Detroit show has shown up on disc, and the overall result



is a somewhat satisfying set. The sound is fairly typical of a good, but certainly not perfect, analog audience tape from the *Born in the U.S.A.* tour. *No Used Cars in Motor City* is taken from a very good tape, albeit with some problems inherent from the source as well as some generation loss added in along the way. This is not something you'll want to listen to over headphones, which seem to exacerbate the problems with this set; it's rather typical of a lot of other circulating tapes from this tour—not great, but not bad.

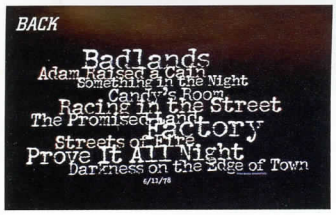
The taper was drastically adjusting levels during the first song, and the edited results presented here are probably best skipped. The final encore "Twist and Shout" is also incomplete, as the tape ran out. But save for the occasional level adjustment or tape-flip edit, the main part of the show is presented pretty much in its entirety.

Sound problems aside, the reason this set is released has more to do with the performances. This was still fairly early in the *Born in the U.S.A.* tour, and Bruce and the band were in fine form. Highlights include "Open All Night" with a long story-intro, "Trapped," "Used Cars," the solo-acoustic "No Surrender," "Because the Night" and "I'm a Rocker." Bruce was in fine voice as well, and his delivery on "Sherry Darling" is particularly notable. You might be able to find a better tape of this show if you look hard enough, but for now this one at least does the job.

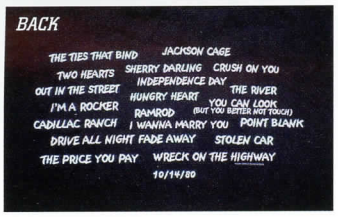
Bottom line, though, this would not make my top ten of shows to get from the *Born in the U.S.A.* tour, and it probably wouldn't make it on my top 25 performances from the entire tour. It's nice to have, but certainly not essential. —*RB*

CONCERT T-SHIRT SALE!

All are officially licensed, 100% pure Springsteen shirts, and all are on special: get any two shirts for $35, and any four for $60. That's like getting a **free** shirt when you buy three! Quantities are limited. All shirts are pre-shrunk 100% cotton.



DARKNESS T-SHIRT
Black, with the *Darkness* album cover in color on the front, and song titles printed on the back in tan and gray. As sold on the 1999-2000 Tour. L or XL. **$20**



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TRACKS T-SHIRT
White, front only, with the four cover images from the *Tracks* CDs in color. "Bruce Springsteen" and "1999" in black. As sold on the 1999-2000 Tour. L or XL. **$20**

NEW JERSEY TOUR T-SHIRT
Black, with a beautiful color image of Asbury Park's Convention Hall on the front, 1999 Meadowlands dates on the back! As sold on the 1999-2000 Tour. L or XL. **$20**

ALSO AVAILABLE:

BORN TO RUN T-SHIRT White, with the album cover on the front, and a smaller photo from the *BTR* shoot on the back. As sold on the '99-2000 Tour. L or XL. **$20**

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White, with the album cover in color on the front, and song titles printed on the back in red and blue. As sold on the 1999-2000 Tour. L or XL. **$20**

SILHOUETTE T-SHIRT
Tour shirt #1. Black, one-sided, with the now classic silhouette image of Bruce and Clarence in red (see pin below) on front. L or XL. **$20**

COME TOGETHER T-SHIRT Official shirt from the 1998 Red Bank concert that brought Bruce, Steve, Max, Clarence, Danny, Southside and others together to benefit the family of a slain police officer. Black, with the concert logo in color on the front (pictured left), and all artists listed on back. XL. **$20**

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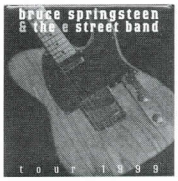
SILHOUETTE PIN A 1-1/4" square enamel pin with the image of Bruce and CC, "Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band Tour 1999." **$6**

GUITAR BUTTON A 2" square pin of Bruce's Fender, "Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band Tour 1999." **$3**



BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN & THE E STREET BAND 2000 CALENDAR The official calendar sold on tour, designed by Springsteen's art team. Yeah, the year's over, but this is still a great tour souvenir, with beautiful shots of Bruce and the E Street Band by Annie Leibovitz, Eric Meola, David Gahr and others. **$12**

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more from his own preconceived ideas about what a Bruce Springsteen show should be, rather than taking the time to observe and absorb what Springsteen was choosing to say.

I consider myself a "longtime, die-hard fan," and I know that Mr. Springsteen was speaking to me at every show I attended. Did many people go to these shows because it was an event? Of course they did, mostly evidenced by the "beer & bathroom" runs and the constant "This is 'Born in the U.S.A.'"/"No, it isn't" conversation one heard every time Mr. Springsteen picked up that 12-string Takamine. This more "corporate" crowd (what exactly does that mean?) should not be condemned for going, nor should Mr. Springsteen's show be evaluated by who was in the audience.

I, for one, felt the spirituality every night. On a cold night in Indianapolis, after not having been to a show in seven years, I wept as my years of fandom were affirmed. I had the same exhilarating, life-affirming experience every time I saw Bruce and the Band on this tour. He spoke to how I feel today as a man, not how I felt as an adolescent.

Unlike other forms of entertainment, a Bruce Springsteen concert invites you to participate, to surrender yourself to the music and the message. If you went and were disappointed, then maybe you weren't paying attention. Evaluating any art form is a subjective effort at best and Mr. O'Toole is certainly entitled to his opinion, but as I sit here listening to "Land of Hope and Dreams" I honestly wonder how any one can say this tour was about the past. After more than a quarter century of recording, any tour by Bruce Springsteen is going to be filled with music that is a not a new release, but this tour was about bringing that past into the present... and the future.

Eric Coulson
via e-mail

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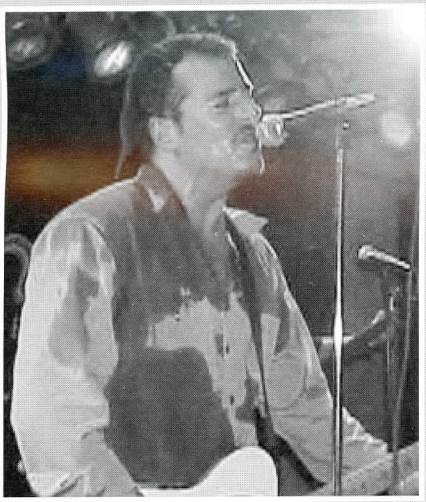
the b street band

a tribute to the boss

the #1 Bruce Springsteen tribute band for over two decades



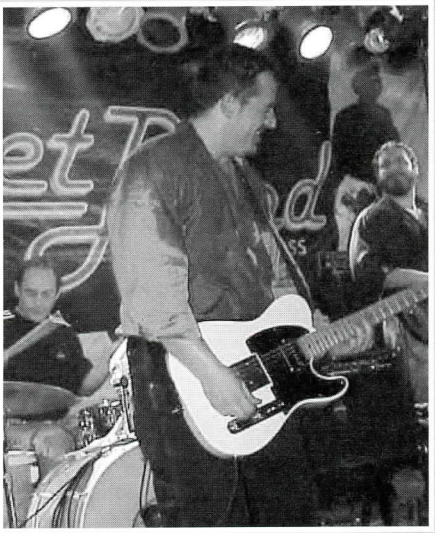
Here's a story of two bands with a lot in common. Both have a large -- if somewhat overlapping -- fan base. Both have played the Meadowlands & both play Bruce Springsteen songs.

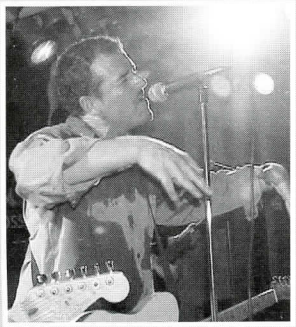
One is Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band.

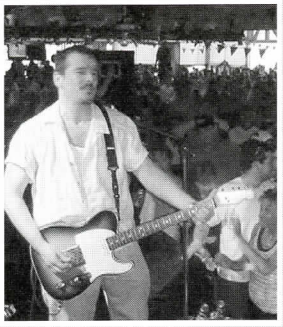
The other is the B-Street Band -- whose fortunes have weirdly paralleled those of The Boss during their long odyssey together.

For over 20 years this New Jersey shore member band has kept the spirit of Bruce alive, playing for an estimated 5 million Springsteen fans, in over 2000 venues including the legendary Stone Pony, 200 colleges, 3 casinos, 2 national conventions & a few private Bruce parties.

They have captured and mastered all the persona and musical talent of the worlds greatest rock and roll band. So, it should be no surprise when the likes of Vini "MadDog" Lopez, Max Weinberg and the "Big Man" himself Clarence Clemens have made their way to perform with the band. Plus, an invite from Conan O'Brien to perform on his show.







Now that Bruce is taking time off and perhaps your soul wasn't completely filled by the power and the glory of the e street band's latest tour, then the b street band is the ultimate Bruce juice you're looking for!

The b street band will embark on a world wide tour in April 2001. Club owners, promoters, & Springsteen fans alike if you are interested in booking the b street band for your next Bruce party, concert or club please contact Will Forte at the b street band hot-line (732) 988-2898 or visit our website.

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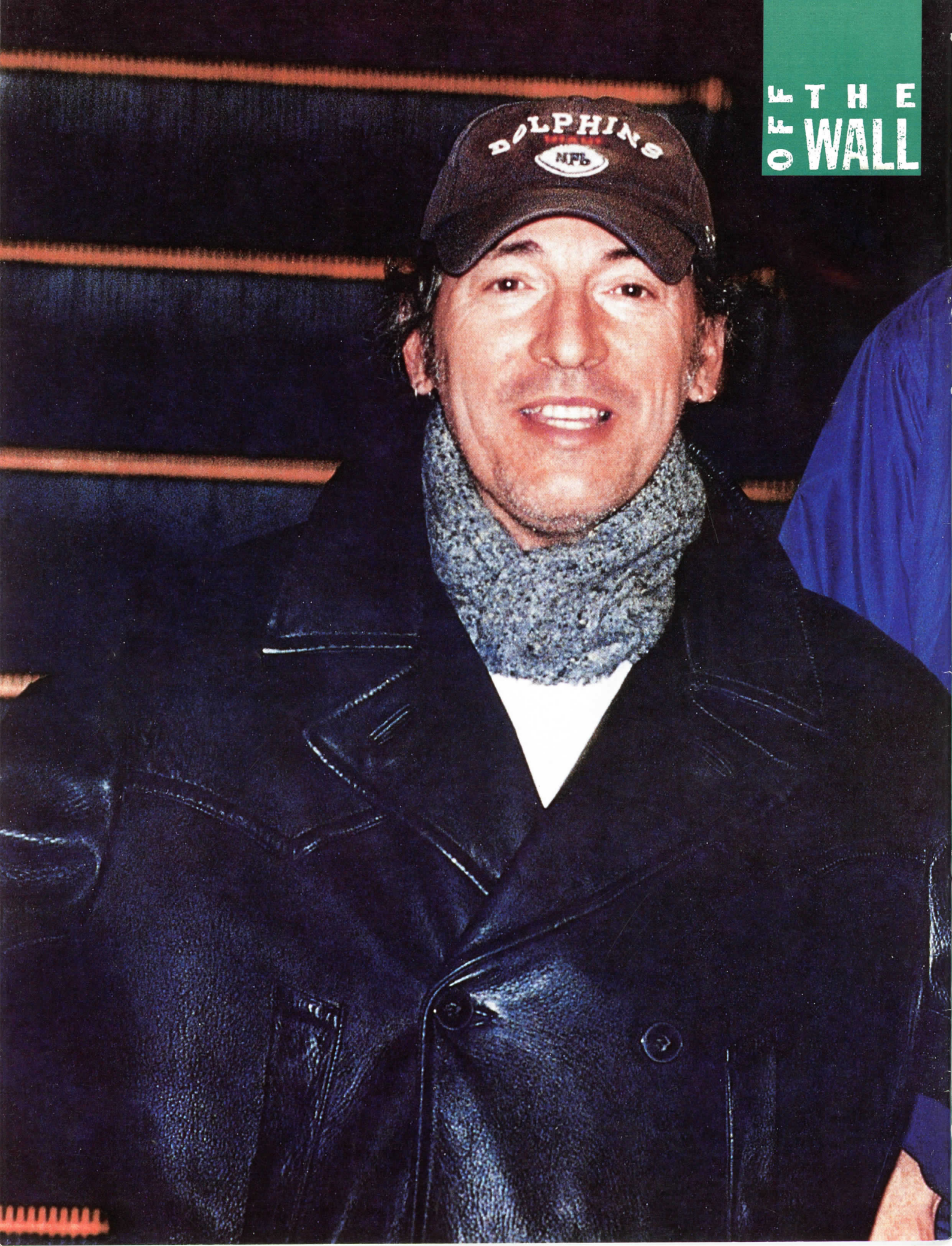
"We'll be seein' ya 'Further on up the road'"

To Bruce and all our fans, thanks for keeping the "Spirit in the Night" alive for 20 years.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